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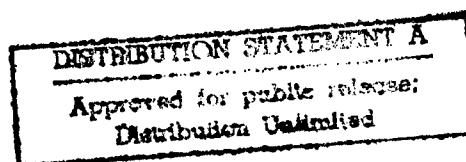
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JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia



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Near East & South Asia

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REGIONAL

ABEDA Announces African Development Projects

45040054 London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic
16 Jan 88 p 36

[Text] The board of directors of the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa held its 45th meeting last month at its headquarters in Khartoum and approved 8 new economic development operations in Africa connected with 4 projects evaluated at 25,965,000 dollars to be implemented in Burundi, Ghana and Uganda. It also sanctioned 4 technical cooperation operations worth 845,000 dollars from which Angola, Niger, the Regional African Center for Survey and Mapping Services and Ghana will benefit.

With this new group of operations, total financing for 1987 comes to 70,673,000 dollars. Total contracts of the bank since 1975 come to about 836 million dollars. Counting the special aid granted by the loan fund between 1974 and 1977, the bank's total financing in the African continent comes to 1,051,150 dollars.

EGYPT

Troops Offered to Gulf Countries for Debt Aid

4500006d Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1600 GMT 31 Dec 87

[Text] Citing unidentified diplomatic sources, the Kuwaiti paper AL-SIYASAH reports that Egypt will dispatch 10,000 troops to the Gulf countries in return for the latter paying part of Egypt's foreign debts, that is \$4.4 billion, over a period of 3 years.

/12232

Plight of Prisoners in Iran Discussed

Background Behind Incidents Detailed

45040031 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
4-10 Nov 87 pp 22-25

[Article by Iman al-Siyad in Burj al-Burullus]

[Text] Nobody knows precisely how many Egyptian prisoners there are in Iran, but in spite of the conflicting statements and the lack of confirmed reports, the fact remains that the number is very large, and some of them have been prisoners for almost 4 years. AL-MAJALLAH contacted the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, talked with Red Cross representatives, and met with prisoners' families in several Egyptian villages and towns, and also met with one of the prisoners who had been released a few weeks ago under extraordinary circumstances.

The various estimates given for the number of Egyptian prisoners in Iran vary, as do the descriptions of those prisoners. Some of the prisoners were volunteer fighters on the front, while others were civilians working in

purely civilian Iraqi agencies and ministries who happened to be in the way of the Iranian forces during their operations inside Iraqi territory. Besides these two categories, there are also some simple fishermen who had been working on small Kuwaiti ships in the Gulf when they were attacked by Iranian war boats; some were killed and the rest were taken prisoner.

No official statistics have been compiled on the actual number of Egyptian prisoners in Iran, a fact which was confirmed by Egyptian Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi when he met with the Islamic World Youth organization in Alexandria. Even though no figures are available, Former Sudanese Foreign Minister Ahmad Zayn-al-'Abidin al-Hindi's estimates are still the most accurate. Following his visit to Iran early this year to try to mediate a solution to the problem, the Sudanese minister estimated that there were 12,000 such prisoners. As was announced at the time, al-Hindi's intercession resulted in an agreement with Teheran whereby the Egyptian prisoners would be released in two groups, the first of which was to arrive in Khartoum in mid-February 1987. In spite of this agreement, which was announced a few days before the Islamic conference met in Kuwait on 26 January, 1987 is now almost over and Teheran has not released a single one of the prisoners which it had promised the Sudanese minister it would release.

The Sudanese mediation for the release of the Egyptian prisoners in Iran was not the only such attempt, and it was not the last. In July 1987, while Iranian President 'Ali Khamenei was visiting Ankara, Turkish officials, at Cairo's request, brought up the subject of the Egyptian prisoners in Iran. They asked that the fishermen and civilians be released and a complete list of the prisoners' names be provided. However, this Turkish mediation did not succeed in achieving a definite agreement or even an Iranian promise in this regard. As Turkey informed Egypt at the time, the only result of the whole affair was that the Iranians expressed their willingness to negotiate with Cairo, "in general," on all issues and problems pending between the two countries, in a meeting at any place and at any level. At the time, diplomatic sources felt that this was an Iranian attempt to conclude a deal which would go far beyond the issue of the prisoners.

Intercessions for their release have not been limited to official channels alone; "non-government" attempts have been made over the past 3 years by prominent Egyptians. The most significant attempt was made in early 1986, when an Egyptian "popular" delegation consisting of several religious figures led by the well-known preacher Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazzali went to Iran at Teheran's invitation. The visiting Egyptians brought up the matter of the prisoners, and met with some of them. As usual, the Iranian authorities promised to release many of them, the first group of which was to arrive in February 1986. However, this never took place.

Apart from the many mediation efforts which have stumbled time after time, Egyptian diplomats have appealed to international organizations to put pressure on the Iranian government in order to force it to adhere to the accepted conventions in this regard. Egypt delivered an official memorandum on this issue to the United Nations in July 1987, and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak instructed Egypt's UN Delegate Ambassador 'Abd-al-Halim Badawi to pursue the matter and make every possible effort in this connection.

The Iranian Obstacles

Egypt's persistent diplomatic efforts to gain the release of its prisoners from Iranian jails have always come up against two main obstacles.

The first is the Iranian claim that international law views these prisoners as "mercenaries," not prisoners of war, since none of them carry Iraqi citizenship and they were fighting a battle which was not theirs. Responding to these claims, one Egyptian diplomat told AL-MAJAL-LAH that the overwhelming majority of Egyptians detained in Iran are civilians who had been working for the oil company and other civilian organizations at the time they were taken prisoner during Iranian operations on the Iraqi islands of Majnun and Kharij. The rest were volunteers in the Iraqi army who had been fighting alongside their brothers because of the nationalist aspects of the battle, under the auspices of Arab joint defense treaties.

The second obstacle standing in the way of the release of the Egyptian prisoners in Iran consists of the conditions which Teheran has set for the negotiations, which most observers feel are unreasonable. These conditions require that Egypt totally cease supplying Iraq with arms and ammunition, and that "Cairo's political leadership make an official announcement to that effect." The mediation efforts made by Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq and Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi have also run up against this Iranian demand, even though Cairo had informed Teheran, through its embassy in Pakistan, that all the weapons and war material it sends to Iraq is primarily defensive.

Teheran's repeated claims that the Egyptian prisoners were nothing but "regular soldiers" fighting with the Iraqi army have been denied from Day One by officials in both countries. In addition to repeated statements made by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz and Egyptian Defense Minister Field Marshal 'Abd-al-Halim Abu-Ghazzalah, President Husni Mubarak stated, during an interview with a Gulf paper in January 1987, that there are no Egyptian military forces in Iraq or anywhere else in the world, since "that would require the approval of the Egyptian people, obtained through specific constitutional channels." Therefore, Mubarak said, "The Egyptian prisoners in Iran are ordinary citizens, and are not soldiers in any sense of the word." Mubarak's statements have also been accompanied by his repeated

insistence, on more than one occasion, that Egypt's firm stand on the Gulf war is based on "Egypt's support for the Iraqi stand and its unwillingness to permit any attack on the territory of any Arab country." Furthermore, in dealing with the matter of the Gulf war, Egyptian diplomats have always referred to "the Arab nationalist responsibility towards Iraq in the context of the joint defense treaty."

On the basis of this stand, Cairo has more than once agreed to supply Iraq with arms shipments, and over the past 2 years has received high-level Iraqi military delegations to discuss developments on the front and study the Iraqi army's arms and ammunition needs. On one such visit, agreement was reached whereby Iraq could draw on the military experience gained during the October War, particularly how the famous "Deversoir Gap" was eliminated—expertise which the Iraqi army needed to deal with the Iranian penetration of Iraqi territory early this year.

As an examination of Cairo's policies over the past few years clearly shows, the Egyptian stand on the Gulf war rests on one fact—that "Arab security is an indivisible whole."

Prisoners By Mistake

On the other side of the Egyptian prisoner issue is the problem of the 72 fishermen whom the Iranian authorities detained after kidnapping them on the Gulf, where they had been working on small Kuwaiti fishing boats. Even though these fishermen are few in number compared to the total number of prisoners, their problem has taken on a special character. On the one hand, they have no connection with either of the warring parties. When they were kidnapped they had only their fishing nets, and there were no weapons or war items in their boats. Furthermore, the Iranian attacks on them took place in either international waters or in Kuwaiti territorial waters.

The first Iranian attack on Egyptian fishermen in the Gulf took place 4 years ago, and resulted in the imprisonment of 18 Egyptian fishermen. On the night of 22 August 1983, the Iranian navy attacked several Kuwaiti fishing boats, on which Egyptian fishermen were working, in international waters in the Arab Gulf. The Iranians sank one boat and seized 6 other boats holding 18 fishermen. The rest of the fishing boats managed to escape after a high-speed chase.

Last June, Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh Salim al-Sabah denied Iranian claims that those boats had been spying on Iran. At that time, the minister explained that the boats had been carrying "Egyptian brothers who had gone out to fish carrying nothing but their fishing nets."

Not one of the first group of prisoners, which includes fishermen from the Egyptian coastal villages of al-Burj and Shata, has yet returned, even after 4 full years. One

of the prisoners is a young boy, 14-year-old Khalid Rajab Ghannam, who had been with his father who had wanted to train him in fishing on the high seas. From that day, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has made one effort after another to solve the fishermen's problem. The issue has been aggravated by repeated kidnapping incidents over the past 4 years, which have brought the number of imprisoned Egyptian fishermen up to 72. The last group was kidnapped in July 1987 in three separate incidents in which three fishermen were killed by Iranian bullets: Subhi Bayyumi, 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Khawajah, and another man, in addition to a fourth fisherman who was shot in the arm. Oddly enough, the four men came from the same village.

The Fishermen's Village

Al-Burj is a small Egyptian village whose simple, modest houses have slept quietly and peacefully ever since it first appeared on the shores of that distant quiet lake, Lake Burullus, 200 kilometers north of Cairo. The people of the village, who have never been concerned for a single day with politics, war or conflict, and who to this day rarely listen to the radio to find out the news about this or that, now suddenly find themselves, in all their simplicity and humbleness, in the middle of the Gulf war going on thousands of miles from their small village. The fires burn long in the hearts of the mothers and innocent children of the village, who wake up each day in the hope that they will hear some news about their four sons who went to the Gulf in search of a living and were kidnapped by the Iranians, to remain prisoners without families for long, seemingly endless years.

A mixture of sadness, anticipation, apprehensiveness and hope can be seen in every corner and every lane of the small village, and in the eyes of the small children, who only know that their fathers went away as usual and did not return as usual. In al-Burj, AL-MAJALLAH met with the families of the missing fishermen and listened to their sad stories and forlorn appeals for help.

The wife of 25-year-old Ramadan Sharrabi said that her husband left a few days after the birth of their first son, who unknown to his father died during his absence. She also doesn't know whether her imprisoned husband himself is still alive or has been killed by the Iranians, just like others before him.

At the home of 25-year-old Ibrahim al-Samahi, there is only tears and silence. His 47-year-old mother can only repeat, "What can we do? The head of our family is a fisherman, and fishermen have only their hands and the sea."

The small daughter of 55-year-old Mu'min Abu-Isma'il refused to tell us her name, and contented herself with saying, "My father is coming with the candy he promised me. All I do now is play with his nets until he comes back."

Isma'il Muhammad Isma'il, one of the fishermen who managed to flee the Iranian attack, told AL-MAJALLAH how the incident occurred. "We were in about 10 fishing boats on which Egyptians were working. We were careful not to cross Kuwaiti border markers to cast our nets in Gulf waters. Suddenly we saw several speedboats approaching. In a little while we could see that they were Iranian war boats. Everyone tried to get away, but the Iranians started shooting and actually succeeded in rounding up several boats, while the others managed to escape."

The village, whose men get together every evening to discuss the matter and pass along the latest news of the missing men, wants the prisoners' boats to remain unused and moored along the shore, as a symbol of its hope that the fishermen will return again.

The Returned Prisoner: My Brother Died In My Arms

'Abdallah Muhammad Bayyumi, one of the Egyptian fishermen who were released by the Iranians 45 days after they were kidnapped, told AL-MAJALLAH about the circumstances of his kidnapping and how the Iranians treated him during his detention. He said, "A group of high-speed Iranian war boats attacked us while we were fishing inside Kuwaiti territorial waters, the boundaries of which we had been careful not to cross. We were all Egyptian fishermen, on about 30 fishing boats. Each boat tried to flee, and all but three boats, one of which was ours, succeeded in getting away. My brother Subhi and my cousin were with me. During the chase, my brother was hit by Iranian bullets and fell down dead in my arms. The Iranians took us to the shore, blindfolded us, and took us to a military barracks where we were detained for some time before being taken to another barracks, which we understood to be in Teheran. We were subjected to intense questioning aimed at finding out whether we were spies or just ordinary fishermen. After that, the Iranians brought in an Iranian man who I understood had been arrested while trying to flee to Kuwait. Later on we learned that he was an intelligence man who was trying to pump us to verify the information we had given. One day he even told us that he liked to listen to Umm Kalthum and wanted to hear one of her songs, and asked one of us to sing one—in order to make sure we were Egyptians. After more than a month's interrogation, they told us that they had decided to release us. They actually took us to a merchant ship which was carrying cargo between Iran and Kuwait and handed us over to the captain, who in turn handed us over to the Kuwaiti authorities."

Ministry Director's Efforts Described

45040031 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
4-10 Nov 87 p 25

[Article by Muhammad Basyuni]

[Text] The Egyptian Foreign Ministry's Director of Consulates Ambassador Muhammad 'Ismat Rida says that he has been constantly following the issue of the Egyptian prisoners in Iran. The Foreign Ministry has raised

the issue of the civilian Egyptian prisoners at the United Nations, and Egypt is continually giving all the information it has on the prisoners to the international organizations concerned.

He added, "We are in constant contact with the Red Cross in order to find out what is happening to those prisoners. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry has asked Iran to at least announce the names of those prisoners in order to reassure their families, who are suffering pain and sorrow because their sons are missing."

In another connection, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has asked Kuwait to make every effort to gain the release of the Egyptian fishermen who were kidnapped while working on Kuwaiti fishing boats. The Foreign Ministry has also asked the French consulate in Egypt (France was looking after Egyptian interests in Iran before relations between France and Iran were severed) to contact the Egyptian prisoners and find out their circumstances. It has also asked the Swiss consulate in Egypt (since Switzerland is looking after Iranian interests in Egypt) to intercede with Iran for the release of the civilian Egyptian prisoners. Egypt has asked France, Switzerland, Pakistan, and every other country which has relations with Iran to intercede in order to gain the release of the civilian Egyptian hostages. However, Iran has made no positive response.

Ambassador Rida adds, "Iran's stand is very saddening. It is not at all diplomatic for international mediation to be met with this twisted Iranian stand, which has avoided acknowledging the existence of Egyptian civilian prisoners, and which has always denied that Iran has Egyptian prisoners. We are constantly receiving hundreds of complaints from their families, which contain information confirming that there are Egyptian civilian prisoners in Iran."

8559

Oil Exploration Agreements

45000006c Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
30 Dec 87 pp 1, 13

[Summary] 'Abd al-Hadi Qandil, minister of petroleum and mineral resources, yesterday signed four agreements for exploring and producing oil in the Gulf of Suez, the Western Desert, and the Nile Valley. An agreement was signed with British Petroleum for exploring oil in abu Zanimah in the Gulf of Suez in an area of 169.4 square km and for spending \$25 million by the company on oil exploration over 5 years. The other three agreements were signed with the U.S. Amoco company to the first agreement, the company shall be committed to spending \$15 million on oil exploration in the area estimated at 193.8 square km in the North October [as published] area in the Gulf of Suez. The third and fourth agreements with the same company add new areas to be explored by the company in accordance with previous agreements.

/12232

Tourism Minister Discusses Role of Private Sector

45040030a London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
18 Dec 87 p 43

[Interview With Egyptian Minister of Tourism Fu'ad Sultan, by Zaki Shihab: "Developing Recreational Tourism Is the Responsibility of the Private Sector;" in London, date not specified]

[Text] Egypt's Minister of Tourism Fu'ad Sultan is a prominent Egyptian economic expert who combines both expertise and practical experience from the standpoint of official responsibility. Minister Sultan recently visited London to speak before a conference, arranged by a British journal, on foreign investment in Egypt and its anticipated returns. AL-HAWADITH took this opportunity to talk with him about the economic situation in Egypt and the various aspects of tourism there. The interview went as follows.

[Question] What is your program for stimulating tourism in Egypt under the new government?

[Answer] For the third time in a row, I have been assigned the Ministry of Tourism. My program, which has been clear from the very first day I assumed this job, consists of concentrating on encouraging the private sector to invest in tourism. I believe that tourism is one of those Egyptian industries which over the short and medium haul could become a driving force behind the national economy. Egypt's distinguishing touristic features are, of course, the year-around moderate climate, which is the main attraction, as well as the cultural and historical factor as represented by the museums and Pharaonic antiquities all along the Nile Valley.

However, what is most remarkable right now is that the tourist is spending a shorter time in Egypt itself, and is not making repeat visits. The tourist obligingly passes through our country, staying no more than 4 or 5 days, and then goes on to some neighboring country to enjoy the sun, the water and the air. We believe that in recent years recreational tourism has come to account for 60 to 65 percent of international tourism, while tourism to see archeological remains has dropped to 15 percent. This decline, which started after the Second World War, is due to the fact that in general, average national incomes around the world have risen and air transportation has become more efficient, which has made recreational tourism the most important aspect of tourism.

What we have done over the past 3 years is to highlight the importance of the Egyptian market in the field of recreational tourism and encourage private investment in the construction of tourist villages and hotels in the vicinity of traditional touristic areas such as Luxor, since these tourist villages and modern hotels combine cultural tourism with rest and recreation.

[Question] What effect has Egypt's difficult economic situation had on stimulating tourism and investment?

[Answer] I don't believe that Egypt's economic circumstances have had any effect on tourism. On the contrary, tourism is increasing and flourishing, because the tourist is concerned about an agreeable climate and facilities which meet his needs. The state is ensuring such facilities, and things are not hard for the tourist. As for food and recreation, these things are related to the activities of the private sector, which is now being given strong support.

Tourism is an industry which could be completely under the supervision of the private sector, from both the ownership and the management angles. Today we are creating the appropriate climate to encourage this. I believe that we have succeeded in transforming the Red Sea coast into a new tourist attraction, since over the last one and a half years recreational tourism there has increased, and the average tourist's stay has increased from 5 to 9 nights. The result is that over the past 9 months we have doubled our 1986 tourism rate, and we have surpassed by 80 percent our best tourist-night year, which was in the early Eighties.

[Question] What led to this increase?

[Answer] Promotion and advertising, of course, which is a joint concern of the private and the public sectors. Everyone is helping promote tourism in Egypt—the international airline companies, the hotels, the tour companies, and the tourist transport companies. They have all placed their resources at the disposal of the private sector, for use in advertising in tourism publications and with international tour companies. Prominent persons have come to Egypt to promote its touristic resources. In addition, the Egyptian authorities have generously allowed through flights and airplanes crossing Egyptian airspace to land at Egyptian airports, which in turn has lowered the cost of a trip to Cairo and has led the airline companies to promote Egypt in their magazines and highlight it as a new resort for recreational tourism.

[Question] Compared to neighboring countries, how much tourism does Egypt handle?

[Answer] The neighboring countries entered the field of recreational tourism before we did. The Mediterranean coast has seen significant development over the past 10 years, and has attracted recreational tourism. As I see it, Egypt never figured prominently in recreational tourism because the Red Sea area was closed to international tourism for political and military reasons. In the late Seventies, with the signing of the peace agreement and the opening of the Red Sea to private investment and international tourism, Egypt acquired a pre-eminent position over neighboring countries because of its year-around moderate climate and its natural beauty. Both

these attractions are unequalled by any other recreational tourist attraction, when compared to the countries along the Mediterranean, which are best known for their attractive establishments.

Today the Red Sea is a virgin territory which can accommodate many times the volume of current investments. I believe that this is the starting point for developing tourism and transforming it into the driving force of the Egyptian economy.

[Question] Which western countries have been most involved in promoting Egypt and its tourist sites?

[Answer] There are five countries: France, Germany, Italy, Britain, and, in first place, the United States. In 1986 there was a drop in tourism, but we are working to gradually restore it to its former level; this year we regained 75 percent of last year's tourism. In this context, America is the principal market for tourism to Egypt.

[Question] What caused the drop in tourism last year?

[Answer] The hijackings which took place in the eastern Mediterranean. Even though they didn't happen in Egypt, the tourism industry is extremely sensitive, and is affected by any incident.

[Question] Lebanon was a prime tourist center prior to the war which broke out there. To what extent has Egypt attracted tourists who might have gone to Lebanon?

[Answer] I don't think that there is any competition between Egypt and Lebanon, since things here are different from Lebanon—even the money and the economy. Many times people say that Egypt is trying to take Lebanon's place in the money market. There is a very big difference between Lebanon's role as a money market and the role which Egypt might possibly play. The Lebanese market is a bank window taking in Arab deposits and redirecting them to world markets, while investing part of them in Lebanon. Egypt is a huge investment market, since the Egyptian labor market amounts to 50 million workers and more, and Egypt's investment needs far exceed those of Lebanon. Therefore, I don't believe that there is any competition between the two countries.

[Question] As a prominent economic expert in Egypt, what solution do you see for the Egyptian debt crisis and the current economic situation?

[Answer] I don't think that this crisis is serious, because Egypt, unlike other developing countries, has a large production base. This production base is in the public sector, which lacks financing and the necessary freedom of management. At the same time, the family sector and the private sector are bursting with fluidity in need of an investment outlet. I believe that the situation would allow a marriage between the private and the public

sectors so as to increase the efficiency of public sector production. The solution to Egypt's problem is simple: increase production efficiency and productivity.

Should this happen, we would find that the production which could be generated by the production base in Egypt would completely cover the deficit in the general state budget and a large part of the balance of trade deficit.

As I see it, a sound economic policy could buoy up the Egyptian economy once again and give it a leading role.

8559

1987 Suez Canal Revenues
45000006b Cairo MENA in Arabic
1430 GMT 31 Dec 87

[Excerpts] Muhammad 'Izzat 'Adil, chairman of the Suez Canal Commission, has disclosed that the Suez Canal revenues for 1987 are the highest since the canal was established. This year's revenues total \$1.222 billion, \$115 million above last year's revenues.

/12232

Islamic Money Seen Being Used Against Muslims
45040030b Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic
2 Dec 87 p 53

[Editorial by Faruq al-Tawil: "After Oil, the Money Weapon; the Muslims' Money—Is It For Them Or Against Them?"]

[Text] The peace of God to the ayatollahs, His mercy to the Islamic authorities, and His blessings to all Muslim shaykhs. But come, let all of us Muslims, of whatever type, sort, sect or group, ask ourselves where things are taking us, and what goals we are working for. In the end, such an exercise will be useful. I am not calling for any real comprehension, since we may have become averse to thinking. But just open up your discarded Qur'ans and look back to the Prophet's sayings, which put the Arabs and the non-Arabs on equal footing. The Arab is no better than the non-Arab except in piety, and the non-Arab is no better than the Arab save in devotion. The devout Persian is one of the family, and is better than many Arabs.

Come, let us do anything except give money and sacrifice our sons to our enemy on a silver platter. Let us not sacrifice ourselves and hand over our souls, money and riches to our enemy. We are calling on everyone to defend Islam. I am not a pessimist, but I see from afar that Muslim unity is neither close at hand nor far away. Many indications have begun to surface. The darker it gets, the more it heralds a new dawn. The fact that Egypt returned to the Islamic conference in Kuwait; that the Muslims got together in Kuwait; and that they faced up to all the challenges and promises—all this means that

the Muslim leaders want to achieve the most basic form of agreement among Muslims. This in itself revives or strengthens the hand of those in Iran who are calling for the same thing. Ultimately, the ayatollahs are Muslims preserving God's book, not Satans, and it is not impossible for them to return to the Muslim fold, because in the end they will go back to that part of God's book which they are protecting which says, "If you turn to peace, I shall also turn to it." Egypt's return to the Arab ranks is also a complaisant return to the voice of reason, which seems to be growing louder. It is a matter of time, nothing more.

The natural course of development, and the emergence of a clear trend in this direction, confirms that the Arab League is regaining its standing, and therefore that the unity of Muslims of all sects is being restored.

However, we must struggle in an Islamic way. We must stress that we shall never throw more fuel on the fire set by those who want to dominate us, keep us in a state of backwardness, famine, disease and ignorance, and prevent us from attaining any sort of progress and development. We must realize one important thing—that our money has begun working against us. Our riches have been turned against us. This very same issue was stirred up after the Suez Canal was dug. Is the Canal for Egypt, or is Egypt for the Canal? Will the Canal defend Egypt and bring it money, or will the Canal bring colonialism to govern, exploit, and get rich, while Egypt remains property of the Canal, serving it but not benefitting from it?

This is what is happening to Arab money today. Do the riches of Islam belong to the Arabs and the non-Arabs, or do the Arabs and the non-Arabs belong to these Islamic riches? Will the Arabs and non-Arabs benefit from their petroleum or gold, or will they give it, freely and with pleasure, to those who wish them ill? Come, let's look at the role of Arab and Iranian money, at the role of Iraqi and Iranian money, at the Arab riches kept in American and European bank accounts—at how they are working and at whose expense.

Are we mistaken in saying that the surplus profit from the investment of these billions go for weapons, aid and assistance to Israel to enable it to expel our Palestinian brothers and set up a state whose military forces are equal to the combined military forces of all the Arabs? Are we wrong if we say that the Jews of America and Europe want the Arabs' money? Are we right or wrong to claim that some of this money goes for weapons, bread and butter for Lebanon, to enable it to slaughter itself with its own hand, not the hand of its enemy? Are we mistaken if we claim that some of this surplus Arab money is used to fan the fire of civil strife and shameful Islamic warfare in every Muslim land, even in the streets and neighborhoods? Or are these the bitter facts, which we must acknowledge?

Has Arab money become a weapon against the Arabs themselves? Is the money being turned against them, or is it still theirs? Is the Canal for Egypt or Egypt for the Canal question being repeated with Arab money?

Can any Arab, individual or state, get his money back to his country? Can this money, no matter how small an amount, have an effect on the enemy's plans? Will the return of this money lift the Muslims' heads? Will the Muslims' money return to the Muslims? The Arabs' money to the Arabs? Iran's money to Iran? Iraq's money to Iraq? Or will it all go for naught, scattered among the arms factories, merchants and middlemen? How long will Arab money continue to be a prop and support and shield for the dollar, the mark, the franc, the yen and the ruble?

For example, Libya takes the American dollar as payment for its petroleum, and gives it to Russia as payment for weapons, to the point where it has become the most important source of money for the Russian treasury. The money is only in transit through Libya, on its way to Russia. The entire increase in oil prices was converted into arms purchases, thus restoring the money to its original owners. Then the price of oil dropped, while the price of arms remained high.

During the Sixties, we called for using the petroleum weapon against all those who thought of waging war on us. Later on, we actually used it successfully during the 1973 war. Shall we today call for using the weapon of Arab-Iranian-Egyptian money—the weapon of Islamic wealth, because of our faith in God—the weapon of money—rather than sacrificing our sons? Or shall we continue to support, save, give, prop up, and protect the dollar? Shall even the Egyptians continue to put their money in Cyprus, London and Paris, because the banks there give better interest? Or shall we try out the money weapon, and bring it back to its homeland, after its having been in exile for so long? We have seen, we have lived through, the results of the migration of Arab money. How much longer?

8559

Radio Station Inaugurated

45000006a Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 23 Dec 87 p 2

[Text] A new local radio station began broadcasting from Bur Fu'ad yesterday covering the entire city. The station is provided with the most modern equipment and is being inaugurated during the national celebrations of the Port Said Governorate.

/12232

Opposition Press Attacks Foreign Influence

Ills Attributed to Foreign Influence

Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 17 Dec 87 pp 7, 4

[Article by Dr Muhammad 'Asfur: "The Narcotics, Prostitution, Aids, and Weapons War"]

[Text] There is no doubt that the call to establish a national, patriotic front is a call that goes beyond the limited and recognized political parties. This front would be the last and only line of defense against the vicious attack which comes from outside, beyond our borders. The aim of this attack is the material destruction and psychological devastation of the people of Egypt. Besides, the aim of this attack is to destroy the Egyptian state and render it economically, socially and even morally bankrupt. It is certain that a partisan, fanatic government would not be capable of standing up to such a destructive, foreign conspiracy. The claim I make, in fact, is that this democratic despotism—if despotism can be democratic because it is national—provides the strongest protection for the forces of destruction. Autocrats in Third World countries may or may not be aware of that fact. I believe that any national front has to include Egyptian nationalists from all political, intellectual, and scientific walks of life. That is, members of such a front must come from political parties, professional associations and societies, and from all coalitions and institutions.

Such a front, however, must rise above all sectarian and political disputes and agree on rules and principles which are clear and specific and may be summed up in two main objectives: making people prosper and respecting a citizen's humanity by guaranteeing his liberties. It is self-evident that these two objectives cannot be achieved unless a democracy that is just and free is established. This dreadful devastation which is destroying us as a people and as a state will continue unless the people's sovereignty is restored and people are able to make their own political and social decisions. This dreadful devastation will continue unless citizens' political, social and legal humanity is restored. I do, however, have considerable doubt that such a modest objective can be achieved, although it is achievable in the smallest and most impoverished country in Europe. The colonialist West will not permit us to have a democracy, social justice, or freedom. 'Abd-al-Nasir was destroyed the same way Muhammad 'Ali was destroyed. But regardless of the two rulers' despotic and military frame of mind, it is impossible to deny that the two men had plans for liberation from western domination, even though they did make mistakes and injustices and horrible crimes were committed under their regimes. The two men did lose their way when they ignored the people as a source of national strength. They thought they could score victory over the West by relying on obedient soldiers and using them as a weapon of war. The two men somehow stifled the free citizen in various ways.

Tawfiq's mistake was in turning the British against the 'Urabi Revolution. But Al-Sadat's mistake was his submission to the American empire because "it held 99 percent of all the cards." He was content with the role of a subordinate to one of the two superpowers.

Although denying the two superpowers' domination over Europe and over Third World countries may be foolish and smug, there is a fundamental difference between the conditions of Europeans and those of people in Third World countries. Europeans enjoy a sense of sovereignty and prestige in their systems of government. No matter how powerful American or Soviet domination of Europe's foreign policy is, neither superpower can corrupt government regimes or permit the establishment of military governments that plunder the country the same way such governments plunder their countries in Third World countries. Even in the Federal Republic of Germany and in Japan, two countries which are occupied by American military troops, national rulers scored victory over the foreign occupation. They achieved prosperity for their peoples and economic superiority for their countries. How then does this compare with what is happening in Egypt and in Third world countries?

The starting point in any successful national action has to be the certainty that foreign conspiracy is behind what goes wrong in our country and the devastation in it. The aim of foreign conspiracy is not only to keep Egypt in a state of subordination, but also to crush the people of Egypt as the leaders of both the Arab and Islamic regions. Therefore, just as the West planted a racist regime in South Africa and is fiercely protecting that regime so that the enslavement of black people can continue, so did the West plant Israel as a racist, hostile state in the center of the Arab nation. Humiliating the Arab nation and dissipating its strengths were not the only reasons why the West placed Israel in that location. Israel was placed in the center of the Arab nation basically to exterminate the Arab people, just as the Red Indians were exterminated in America. However, the purpose of this article is not to provoke people and arouse their feelings of hatred, but the only intent of the article is to make my countrymen aware that foreign conspiracy is the source of all calamities. "Regardless of good intentions" it is the regime and despotism that enable conspirators to execute their criminal plans in Egypt and in other Arab countries.

It is the opinion of Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal that the new ruling elite in the Arab homeland is made up of those conspirators who form an alliance of three groups which link together oil operations, the arms trade, and the activities of international intelligence. That opinion, which was declared by Haykal in 1987 echoed the same opinion which he had printed at the end of 1980 in AL-MUSTAQBAL AL-'ARABI Magazine. That made him subject to arrest in September 1981 because the statement was a hidden reference to al-Sadat, who was authorized by law to monopolize the business of buying weapons and providing them to the Egyptian army. And

yet, Haykal's statement expresses only part of the truth, not all of it. For it is not enough to say that this alleged tripartite alliance is that same elite group which governs in its own interests and in the interests of foreign countries. What must be said instead is that old colonialist methods are still being used in the Arab region. While emphasis is being placed on some of these methods, other methods are being introduced. But the primary objective of all these methods remains the destruction of the people's powers and their national and moral fibre.

The old colonialism had in some way attacked the people's identity and their religious faith, spreading decay and corruption in their midst, poisoning social relations, and stirring up regional biases and prejudices. These methods are still being used and developed by the new colonialism which is using a strong directed media and adding to its methods those of creating a false awareness and a sense of intellectual loss. Foreign intelligence agencies go so far as to buy off a few national scientists. They ask them to join suspect scientific institutions, which collect information for these intelligence agencies, in conducting research and studies. Mixing politics with the weapons and narcotics business is something that is practiced by the American Central Intelligence Agency (AL-AHRAM 12/7/87). [Taken from THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH.]

But it is necessary to sound a warning about the imminent danger which is threatening us. This danger comes because of the war of decay and of psychological, physical and moral destruction which is being waged by enemy forces. Narcotics and prostitution rings are the weapons of this war. If there is anyone who doubts that Israel's Moussade is behind the shipments of white poison which is killing our young people, destroying our economy, and spreading crime in our society, he should read the 12/8/87 issue of AL-SHA'B Newspaper which reported that Moussade leaders decided to fight Egypt with various weapons after relations between Egypt and Israel deteriorated or cooled. Moussade leaders wanted "to destroy Egyptian society from within." Some of the weapons they decided to use include all kinds of narcotics which they were going to spread on the broadest scale. But when they failed to accomplish their objective with cocaine and heroin, Moussade agents formed a prostitution ring that was made up of scores of Jewish women who are citizens of different countries. Moussade sent the women to Egypt in groups so they can spread the disease, Aids, in the country. They were to use sex to lure a few corrupt Egyptians at some nightclubs, major hotels, public places frequented by tourists, and furnished apartments.

This news report should not be taken lightly. What was attributed to Moussade is not at all unusual in the rationale of old and new colonialism. Alcohol was the main weapon of destruction used against the African people. Colonialist forces used it to subjugate or rather exterminate the black race in Africa and America. (See the book by the Muslim American professor, Husayn

Bulhan, about the psychology of persecution; see also the many sources he used: pages 44-48.) Britain waged a narcotics war in China, using opium in particular, and Israel also used narcotics and prostitution to destroy the Iranian people under the Shah.

If the Ministry of Interior understood its true responsibilities in protecting national security, it would have stopped harassing citizens, journalists, attorneys and university professors because their opinions differed from those of the ruling party. Instead of asking for greater powers so it can arrest people, "indulge in its hobby of torturing them," and enact a law to deal with what it calls terrorism, the ministry should have confronted the vicious foreign attack whose weapons are narcotics and prostitution. It should call for the execution of traitors who are carrying out Israel's plot. They are the ones who deserve to be arrested.

Weapons make up a story that is altogether different. According to Bulhan, the superpowers are using the modern technology of death to snare the rulers of Third world countries and to drain these countries' resources. Then they fan the fires of civil strife inside those countries so that the bloodshed and money drain can continue. When demand for weapons grows and turns into a frenzy, more money is spent on weapons than African and Asian countries spend on health, education and basic facilities. A strenuous intellectual exercise is not needed to understand that the primary purpose of planting the Zionist, racist and hostile entity in the middle of the Arab nation is to stir up conflict among the countries of the Arab world and deplete the Arab world's economic power. Rapid technological developments in the weapons industry quickly turn weapons into nothing more than scrap iron. A true sense of patriotism requires a fundamental and essential review of our military strategy. This review should be conducted in a manner that would achieve a balance between national security requirements and the essential requirements for an honorable life for the Egyptian people. Exorbitant and wasteful military spending should not outweigh these requirements. According to Amin Huwaydi, that would lead to the militarization of society and the formation of a military industrial complex which would link together the interests of a class of officers. It would open back doors from which bribes and commissions would be permitted to enter the picture, and people's integrity would be for sale. (AL-AHALI 12/9/1987). It is that which prodded us to press for repeal of the law which was issued in 1971 authorizing the head of state to purchase and provide weapons to the Egyptian army. In asking for this we are not prompted by the constitutional ban against the president's involvement in trade, but we are prompted first by the duty to preserve the nobility of that high and momentous office.

Report on Government Fraud

45040037 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 9 Dec 87 p 1

[Article: "Government and Fraud"]

[Text] Voter registration, which started early this December, will continue till the end of the month. Unfortunately, this has become a routine operation

which stirs up no interest despite its importance. Voter registration rosters are used as the first step on whose basis rests every operation to construct the institutions of government and those that make decisions in the state. These are national level institutions or local institutions in the governorates, cities, villages, and neighborhoods. If the voter registration rosters, which form the foundation of all that are not sound, then the structure which is based on those rosters will be not be sound.

We all know that the current rosters do not provide a suitable foundation for any honest elections. They provide a crude model of manipulation and fraud.

Although there are approximately 25 million adult Egyptians who are entitled to exercise their political rights, the number of people who are actually registered in the voters' rosters is under 15 million.

These rosters contain names of millions of people who are deceased and names of people who have been missing and who immigrated. The rosters also contain names of people who don't exist but whose ballots are used by election brokers, by those who deal in blocs and tribal and family prejudices, and by candidates of the government's party. That fact makes any election fraudulent from the outset, even if the impossible were achievable and government tried very hard to avoid fraud.

More than 4 years ago our party asked the government to abolish the current registration rosters and set up new ones. These new rosters would be identical to civil registration records. But the minister of interior at that time stated that doing that would require a long period of time. That was when elections for the People's Assembly were about to be held. It's been many years, and since that time elections for the People's Assembly were held in 1984 and again in 1987. Before that elections for local councils were held in 1983. And yet, the government made no serious attempt to correct the registration rosters. The ministry is content with allowing voters to register periodically, each year during the month of December.

Any discussions about democracy and about the freedom and integrity of the election process will remain nonsensical and deceptive unless the current rosters are abolished and replaced with accurate rosters which are identical to the civil register. That is the first step which must be taken to build a democracy that is based on the possibility of sharing power through the ballot box. It is the government's responsibility, if it really wants to lend any credibility to anything it says about democracy and rejecting violence, to act immediately to correct the voters' rosters.

It is the responsibility of political parties and of opposition forces to mobilize public opinion and democratic organizations to press the government to comply with this simple, yet firm democratic demand.

It is the responsibility of every citizen who is not registered in the current voter registration rosters to register promptly during this month. The quest must not be abandoned in its entirety just because all our demands are not being met.

Israeli "Conspiracy" To Spread Aids
45040037 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Dec 87 pp 6, 4

[Article by Mahmud Bakri: "A Network of Israeli Prostitutes To Spread Aids in Egypt"]

[Text] A conspiracy planned by Israel's Moussade to spread Aids (Acquired Immune Deficiency System) among Egyptians was uncovered in the last few days. Scores of Jewish women, who formed a network of women from Israel, Europe, and America, were sent to Cairo. According to their instructions from Moussade, their mission in Cairo was a national act serving the interests of "greater" Israel.

The conspiracy, which was planned with care and precision, required the women to lure morally corrupt young Egyptian men they would meet in some entertainment establishments and furnished apartments into having sexual relations. The women did in fact succeed. They lured a few corrupt young men from some nightclubs, major hotels and a few important tourist attractions such as Khan-al-Khalili, and al-Muski in old Cairo.

The number of young men who were victimized by that network were subjected to a shock. Upon waking up they found a note which stated, "Welcome to the Aids Club!"

The information confirmed that the Israeli Embassy in Cairo was responsible for setting up members of the network in furnished apartments under assumed names. That was done so that Egyptian security agencies would not be able to find them.

It has been stated that Egyptian security agencies, who have been looking for members of the network, are conducting broad range and extremely confidential investigations. Inquiries about the young men who were victimized by that network are also underway in an attempt to curb the spread of the disease.

The Supreme Authority for the Israeli Moussade had held a meeting about 3 years ago after relations between Egypt and Israel had deteriorated. A decision was made at that meeting to fight Egypt with several weapons including spreading the use of all kinds of narcotics on the broadest scale among the ranks of the Egyptian people. Israel's Moussade also decided to use espionage and information gathering activities about everything that is happening in Egypt in an attempt to destroy Egyptian society from the inside.

According to information available to AL-SHA'B, over 50 million dollars were appropriated for that purpose. That was for assistance. A general semi-annual report

was to be submitted to Moussade leaders to report to them the results of operations which had been agreed to and to let them know what resources would be required for the following period.

The network of prostitutes was introduced during the past few months after cocaine and heroin failed to achieve the objectives that were being sought by their use. That is why more than 100 women were recruited on a preliminary basis. Some of these women came from Israel, but others were Jewish women of different nationalities. The women were to be sent to Egypt in groups of 10. Each group would stay in Cairo for 1 month and would then be replaced by another and so on.

These women are confirmed carriers of the Aids virus. An agreement was reached with the ones who live in Europe and the United States to go to Cairo directly from the countries where they reside. The Israeli Embassy was to provide them with everything they needed through the network of Israeli Moussade agents who reside in Cairo and who have close ties with Moshe Sasson, Israel's ambassador in Cairo.

08592

JORDAN

Officials Discuss Production, Marketing of Phosphate

44040063 Amman AL-SAWARI in Arabic
Nov 87 pp 10-13

[Interviews with Mr Makram Zurayqat, Director of Marketing and Sales at the Jordanian Phosphate Company; Dr 'Abd-al-Fattah Abu Hassan, Deputy General Manager for Production Affairs; Dr Ishaq al-Jallad, Deputy General Manager for Technical Affairs; and with Mr Marawan Arshidat, Financial Director, by 'Atallah al-Sharif: "White Jordanian Gold Is Jordan's Promising Fortune;" date and place of interviews not specified]

[Text] To supplement its interview with Mr Wasif 'Azir, general manager of the Jordanian Phosphate Company, AL-SAWARI interviewed the directors of the company's principal departments.

In what follows we present the outcome of those interviews to our honorable readers. On the other hand, we are doing this because the Jordanian Phosphate Company has an important role to play in the national economy.

AL-SAWARI's first interview was the one it conducted with Mr Makram Zurayqat, the company's director of marketing and sales.

[Question] Mr Makram Zurayqat, in your capacity as director of marketing and sales in the Jordanian Phosphate Company, can you tell us where Jordanian phosphate is exported? Can you tell us who are your most important customers?

[Answer] Jordanian phosphate is exported to different parts of the world. It is exported to Europe, Asia, America and Australia. In addition, 20 percent of the amount of phosphate we export is consumed locally. The countries which import Jordanian phosphate are Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Italy, Greece, France, Norway, West Germany, Sweden, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico.

[Question] Has the world's economic depression affected the process of marketing Jordanian phosphate?

[Answer] The economic depression in the world's markets has extended to phosphates. Phosphate prices have been greatly affected by the worldwide depression. Compared to prevalent prices in 1984, prices fell in 1987 by 30 percent.

Furthermore, the value of the dollar in relation to the Jordanian dinar declined in 1986 and 1987 from what it was in 1985.

[Question] Compared to other phosphates produced in the world, is Jordanian phosphate competitive in its quality and price?

[Answer] Jordanian phosphate is competitive with the kinds of phosphates which are produced by other countries as far as price and quality are concerned. In many cases the geographical location gives Jordanian phosphate an advantage because of its proximity to the consumer markets in Europe or Asia. The geographical location gives us a great advantage with regard to Asian markets. These are the markets whose phosphate consumption is growing continuously.

AL-SAWARI then turned to Dr 'Abd-al-Fattah Abu Hassan, an engineer and deputy general manager for production affairs. The following questions were posed to him.

[Question] What is Jordan's rank among the world's phosphate producing countries? Will that rank change in the coming years?

[Answer] Jordan is considered the fifth phosphate-producing country in the world. Phosphate is currently being produced at two locations: at the White Valley Mine and at al-Hasa Mine. Both mines are in south

Jordan. In addition, phosphate is produced at another location near Amman. That location is al-Rasifah Mine, which is shut down at the present time for technical and economic reasons.

The fourth mine, which in the future will be considered the first mine as far as production quantity is concerned, is al-Shaydiyah Mine. It is located south of Ma'an.

The kinds of phosphate which are produced are as follows:

A 70-72 percent phosphate (Right Calcium Phosphate) and a 73-75 percent washed phosphate are produced from al-Hasa Mine. At the White Valley Mine a 70-72 percent phosphate, a 73-75 percent phosphate, and a 71-73 percent phosphate are produced.

At the present time two grades of improved 70-72 percent phosphate are produced at the White Valley Mine: one grade is dust free and the other has low chlorine. These two grades are produced after soft phosphate separation processes are carried out. Also, mixing methods may be used to produce other kinds of phosphate at al-Hasa Mine and White Valley Mine. As far as al-Rasifah Mine is concerned, the phosphate which is produced there is the 66-68 percent phosphate. A 70-72 percent phosphate is also produced there. A lower grade phosphate can also be produced from that mine. In addition, a higher grade of calcified phosphate, up to 73-75 percent, can also be produced, but that matter is still under study.

[Question] When was phosphate discovered in Jordan, and how did that happen?

[Answer] Early in this century, in 1908 to be specific, when the railroad line to Saudi Arabia was under construction, phosphate was discovered in al-Rasifah and then in al-Hasa. Early production then was very limited. Tunnels and primitive methods were used then to produce the phosphate. This means that the change in production to what it is now, whether it was done by the company or by contractors, has been tremendous. The company now uses very modern equipment such as dredging machines because the layers of fill dirt are high. The company uses dredging machines to reduce excavating costs compared with those costs at other locations and mines.

[Question] How are modern production processes carried out?

[Answer] Production operations start with the removal of fill dirt by means of dredging machines or ordinary shovels and dump trucks. This follows boring and blasting operations which are carried out to crack and break up the layers of rock which can then be easily carried away by dredging machines and transported by dump trucks. This fill dirt is then deposited in special locations

which had been determined free of any layers of phosphate. Layers of phosphate are then mined, and the phosphate is transported to the crushers where it is sifted. The soft phosphate is removed, and the low-level calcified phosphate is crushed and stored in special places. If the phosphate is the ordinary 70-72 percent variety, washing is not required, and the phosphate is then sent to the dryers where its humidity is reduced to the level which is required in foreign markets. But to produce a designated grade of phosphate, the phosphate is sent by hoisting devices [to locations] where impurities are removed, the percentage of phosphate increased, and the phosphate itself is dechlorinated.

[Question] Can we give AL-SAWARI's readers an idea about how the company's production developed?

[Answer] As far as the development of the company's production is concerned, production in 1953 was approximately 40,000 tons only. In 1963 production was 626,000 tons, and in 1973 it rose to 1.5 million tons. In 1980 production amounted to 3.9 million tons. This year, in 1987, we are planning to produce 6.7 million tons of phosphate. We are taking into consideration the fact that production at al-Rasifah Mine has been suspended. It is known that current production capacity at the mines is as follows:

Al-Rasifah Mine: 1 million tons The White Valley Mine: 2.9 million tons Al-Hasa Mine: 3.9 million tons Total capacity is 7.8 million tons.

Regarding future production quantities, the company's programs, and its quality control, projections in the existing production plan show that the company hopes to produce 10 million tons of phosphate in 1996 from the three mines. At a future date, however, the company hopes to produce 15 million tons.

What is important in this regard is that mining operations are carried out according to economic guidelines since phosphate can be found in many regions but in quantities that are not economic, according to the current definition of the term. That is why the company is trying to increase production capacity. It is trying to join together the regions where operations are now being carried out with those where the company has established facilities, such as the residential community, the high-rise buildings, the furnaces, and the devices which increase the percentage of phosphate at al-Hasa and the White Valley mines. But all these operations must meet economic guidelines.

But the future of mining and production operations at the Phosphate Company lies in the al-Shaydiyah Mine which has large reserves and good quality phosphate. The mine is also close to the port of al-'Aqabah.

The company has always given most of its attention to the subject of grade or quality because it wants to produce good quality, homogeneous products containing

high percentages of phosphate which are suitable for the factories in the world. Since developments might occur in phosphate grades and in the production of phosphate materials, whether these materials are for industry or agriculture, quality control remains an important matter for the company.

Dr Ishaq al-Jallad, deputy general manager for technical affairs answered the questions that were put to him.

[Question] What in your view is required to develop production in the company?

[Answer] I have seen the company's production develop ever since the company was founded. I was there in the fifties when phosphate was produced from the al-Rasifah Mine, and I was also there in the seventies and early eighties when production from al-Hasa and the White Valley mines was established and developed.

Production development in the company requires the availability of the following ingredients:

1. The company must have a trained technical and administrative staff who can operate the devices and equipment with a high level of efficiency. The company's staff must be able to deal with whatever is new in this industry.
2. The company must have a technical staff of natives who are experienced in preparing studies, plotting and establishing mines, and using the most modern equipment in the world with a high level of efficiency.
3. The company must have good equipment for transporting and shipping the phosphate from the mines and from the ports.
4. The company must gain experience in handling phosphate production and processing. It must gain experience in handling the new technology of the phosphate industry worldwide. The company must also train its technical staff to handle this industry.
5. The company must have world markets that can import large quantities of phosphate. The densely populated countries are especially important in this regard.

It is my opinion that the Phosphate Company has all the ingredients that are required to develop production. It has gained experience in phosphate production for more than 30 consecutive years. During those years the company did develop production by utilizing its national staff and by relying on its distinguished geographical location and its proximity to the world's densely populated countries.

[Question] Can the company produce better quality grades of phosphate containing less extraneous matter? How can that be done?

[Answer] The kinds of phosphate which are currently being produced from al-Hasa and the White Valley mines are the 70-72 percent, the 71-73 percent, the 72-74 percent, and the 73-75 percent grades. These are considered good grades of phosphate worldwide. Preliminary studies indicate that a higher grade of phosphate, a 75-77 percent product, may be produced from al-Shaydiyah Mines. This grade will be produced by processing some layers of al-Shaydiyah phosphate in a way that can yield a better quality phosphate containing less extraneous matter. This will be done by using flotation technology.

Mr Marawan Arshidat, financial director, concluded this forum by explaining the company's effects on the economy.

Mr Arshidat said, "The Jordanian Phosphate Mining Company has a huge operating capital, and it handles huge returns.

"At an irregular meeting which was held on 4/29/1987 the company's general assembly decided to increase the company's capital from 20 million dinars/shares to 30 million dinars/shares. The public will be invited to subscribe and contribute to the company's capital next October and November. There are two main reasons why the company's capital was increased: first, to restore balance to items in the company's financial structure. The imbalance was a result of the fact that the Phosphate Mining Company had purchased the assets of the Fertilizer Manufacturing Company whose capital was 55 million dinars. The second reason for increasing the company's capital was to help provide the necessary funding for the company's expansion projects, particularly in al-Shaydiyah Mine.

"There is no doubt that the company is making a contribution to the national economy in various ways. It provides a large sum of foreign currency which amounted to 300 million dollars or 100 million dinars in 1986. It is estimated that the company's contribution in 1987 will be close to that figure despite the drop in the price of the dollar and despite lower sale prices for phosphates and fertilizers. The company made up for that by increasing sales.

The company also contributes to the state's treasury. During the past 3 years the state treasury received between 16 and 20 million dinars from the company.

The company also makes contributions to the national economy by being a large employer of native workers. The company employs 4,218 workers: 3,327 are employed in the phosphate unit, and 891 are employed in the fertilizer unit. Wages paid to those employees amount to approximately 18 million dinars annually. This is in addition to payments made by the company to its excavation contractors. In 1986 the company paid those contractors approximately 18.5 million dinars, not to mention the fact that those contractors employ more than 1,000 Jordanian workers.

The company is also considered a principal stimulator of national economic activity. In 1986 its outlays for energy and for the essential requirements that meet its industrial purposes were approximately 11 million dinars.

It is worth noting that despite the company's large foreign currency contribution, which is expected to amount to 300 million dollars in 1987 and a comparable amount in 1986 [sic?], as has already been mentioned, its purchases of foreign products which are needed for its industrial purposes amounted to approximately 55 million dollars in 1986. That is, the net value added measured in foreign currency amounts to approximately 250 million dollars. And that by all standards is a large sum of money.

Besides being one of the most important sources of employment in Jordan's labor market and besides the salaries and wages it pays its employees, the company has given considerable attention to raising the standard of services and benefits to those employees. The company contributes 12.5 percent of the employees' base salaries to a savings fund. All the company's employees have health insurance for themselves and their families. To provide peace of mind and comfort to those employees who work in the company's southern mines, the company provides them with free housing in its modern residential community. In addition, the company established a housing fund whose aim is to offer loans to the company's employees to help them ensure appropriate housing for themselves and their families at the locations of their choice. To provide employees with more peace of mind, the company approved a death fund and a compensation system, which is considered unique. The company pays each employee who leaves his job between 200 and 400 dinars a year for every year of service to the company. In addition, the company appreciates the services and good efforts of workers who reached the age of 60. Because it wants to help those employees who served the company for many years and who had been its employees before the social security system went into effect on 5/1/1980, the company decided to pay its designated contribution for a number of years, thereby making it possible for those employees to continue receiving a pension in accordance with the Social Security Law.

08592

LEBANON

Mufti Discusses Political, Economic Situation
44040062 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
27 Nov 87 p 15

[Interview with Shaykh Hasan Khalid, Mufti of Lebanon by Zaki Shihab: "Using AL-HAWADITH Mufti Khalid Implores the World: 'Supporting Social Institutions Alleviates Lebanon's Suffering';" interview conducted by telephone from London while Mufti Hasan Khalid was in Algeria; date not specified]

[Text] The positions taken by Shaykh Hasan Khalid, mufti of the Republic of Lebanon, are positions which have come to be known for their moderation and their concern for Lebanon's public interest, for sectarian coexistence, and for comprehensive national unity.

Shaykh Hasan Khalid has always tried to bring people together whenever there is a crisis. He invites all political, religious and economic activists for deliberations, and he asks them to make decisions. Dar al-Fatwa, [the institution which issues formal legal opinions], has thus always had an unequivocal position and an opinion which all activists involved in the Lebanese crisis look up to.

In the course of past years the Islamic Coalition, over which His Eminence Mufti Khalid presides, has issued statements clarifying its attitude toward current events on the scene and revealing flaws in the manner in which these events were being handled.

His Eminence recently visited Algeria at the invitation of the Algerian government, which has a policy of consulting with political and religious activists in Lebanon. Mufti Khalid stayed at Jinan al-Mithaq, a residence in the suburbs of the Algerian capital, where official state visitors are housed.

AL-HAWADITH interviewed Mufti Khalid by telephone from London. The text of that interview follows:

[Question] Your visit to Algeria follows visits made by Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, by Patriarch Safir, by President al-Jumayyil, and by leaders of various parties. What is the purpose of your visit?

[Answer] Actually, the purposes of our visit are understood. We accepted an invitation which the Algerian government had extended to us, and we are hoping to meet with a few officials and to talk with them about the affairs of the area and specifically the situation in Lebanon. Algerian efforts, or let's say "endeavors" in this regard are continuing. The objectives of those efforts are well-known, of course. The Algerians want to help narrow the differences between the various points of view in Lebanon or the points of view held by Lebanese and Palestinians on the war in the refugee camps. They also want to bring about a meeting of the minds on different Arab issues which are not unknown to anyone. These either pertain to the situation in the Gulf or to the situation between Syria and the PLO.

[Question] Have you sensed anything from Algerian officials that promises to bring about an end to the war in Lebanon's refugee camps?

[Answer] Our fellow Lebanese citizens, the leaders of the parties, attended the celebrations which were held to commemorate the anniversary of the Algerian Revolution. Chief among those who attended those celebrations were Minister Walid Junblatt and Minister Nabih Barri.

PLO representatives also attended the celebrations. It was an opportunity to talk about the camps. I think that something specific has been attained, or, let's say, a practical program has been achieved to set in motion an initiative that would stop this war which has become a chronic problem that both the Lebanese people and the Palestinian people are suffering from.

Meetings were held between Minister Barri and a leader of one of the Palestinian organizations, (newspapers referred to those meetings) and the features of a schedule were beginning to take shape. The schedule was manifested in positive statements which affirmed the need to put an end to this matter and turn attention to the main question of fighting the Israeli enemy.

[Question] Everyone admits and acknowledges that this war has created a rift between members of the same Islamic rank. Many times it came close to assuming a sectarian nature.

[Answer] The war in the camps damaged people's ideas and causes. Based on our assumptions and concepts, we strive in Lebanon to maintain a framework for Islamic unity and a unified Islamic position. We would frequently join our fellow clergymen in clarifying matters and confirming the unity of our ranks. With far-sightedness, understanding, and the good efforts of those who joined forces to work in this area, we managed to prevent a major struggle which was being anticipated and applauded by many greedy people. We still, of course, have much hope in the efforts which are being made and in the sincere people who can overcome these difficulties and put an end to this painful chapter [of Lebanon's history].

[Question] What does the mufti of the Republic of Lebanon think of the strike which was carried out by the General Federation of Labor? Do you expect this strike to achieve something concrete to alleviate the existing suffering?

[Answer] Undoubtedly, the cause of the strike is the deteriorating economic situation, the social condition, and the excessive rise in the price of the dollar compared to the Lebanese currency whose value has declined. The Lebanese citizen has been crushed: he can no longer cope with this situation and feed his family. I do not exaggerate when I say that since the sharp rise in prices and since the price of a dollar exceeded 500 Lebanese pounds, it has become quite commonplace to see children and even men and women rummaging through garbage in the streets looking for something to eat.

Faced with this situation the General Federation of Labor took action and carried out the strike. But it is greatly feared that this strike will be used for a purpose other than that of improving the status of the Lebanese pound and correcting the miserable economic situation.

[Question] Don't you think that the absence of a government in which there is agreement and resolve drives one to say that the formation of a new government which could meet people's needs and confront the existing economic situation is necessary?

[Answer] At the present time no one is thinking about forming a new government because the separation has, unfortunately, ruled out any thought of forming a government which could confront this tragic situation which you referred to and whose bitterness we are experiencing.

The complexity of the situation became even clearer after President Amin al-Jumayyil took that step toward Egypt. It is known that despite a general sense of despair that a useful outcome can be attained, tireless efforts were being made in that regard to narrow the differences between the points of view of the parties involved. But the recent move toward Egypt was made despite these efforts, and President al-Jumayyil made statements in New York and Canada attacking Syria's role in Lebanon. The atmosphere then became just as clouded as it was before, and efforts which were being made to come out with a new government that can confront the current crisis were impeded.

Nevertheless, we have much hope that the Arab kings and heads of state who met in Amman to participate in the Emergency Summit Conference—the interview was conducted when the Summit Conference was in session—will be able to play a role that will help save the economic situation and make it easier for the people to go on living.

[Question] What do you think would be the way out of the existing situation in which Lebanon has been floundering?

[Answer] A political understanding is a must. Of course, such a political understanding has to be linked with pressures that are to be applied to all the parties involved in Lebanon to induce them to accept something which will accomplish everyone's interests. Pressure must be applied to President al-Jumayyil, to the Phalangists, and to the Lebanese Forces. Pressure must also be applied to help the fraternal country of Syria achieve the idea of rescue for which it has been striving and which it has been trying to achieve.

[Question] Members of the Islamic Coalition meet every week in Dar al-Fatwa. What have they achieved in practical terms by means of their statements?

[Answer] One of the effects of the Islamic Coalition's existence, activities, periodic meetings, and statements, thank God, has been the entry of Syrian troops. Syria's troops assumed responsibility for implementing the security plan in Beirut where the situation had become intolerable. We are grateful to these troops which drove

the militias out of the city, closed down the parties' offices, and helped people lead an ordinary life in a better way than they did before.

The presence of the Islamic Coalition and the continuation of its weekly meetings sheds light on many mistakes which are made. The presence of the Islamic Coalition helps achieve what is good for the country. People are divided into many blocs which have a partisan, sectarian, or confessional character. But the nature of the Islamic Coalition's presence is general: it is an all-inclusive body which utilizes a national, Arab approach in dealing with incidents and events.

[Question] Why don't you travel to these countries which have the means, and why don't you ask them for financial assistance for the needy classes of people in this situation?

[Answer] We will try to do that soon. We received some assistance recently, and we expect to receive more in the near future. What I am emphasizing, however, is that this assistance should be periodic and should concentrate on supporting educational and professional institutions as well as institutions involved in promoting the message of Islam and offering social services. This assistance should also support those institutions which help relieve the severe hardships people are suffering from. Many people have stopped sending their children to school because they cannot afford to pay the fees.

What the Lebanese people and we are suffering from is attributable to the rise in the price of the dollar. It is attributable to the escalating political conflict and to the lack of an agreement. That is why I am stressing the need to ensure assistance which is continuous and periodic.

[Question] Has the book been closed on the assassination of Prime Minister Rashid Karami?

[Answer] That book cannot be closed. If it is, man's existence on Lebanese territory will come to an end also.

Man's dignity must be preserved. When dignity is lost, man loses the justification for his existence.

Rashid Karami was not an ordinary man. He represented the state, and he was killed by people who are affiliated with the state, who are supervised by it, and who receive state money. This case is still pending. The murder of one man is the murder of society. How then are we to consider the murder of a man of Prime Minister Rashid Karami's position and stature? Mr Karami has a special place in the hearts of most Lebanese citizens.

Sham'un Accuses Birri of Obstructionism

44040073a Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 25 Nov 87 p 3

[Article: Danny Sham'un Answers Birri, Refuses To Link Presidential Elections with Reconciliation"]

[Text] Danny Sham'un, president of the National Liberal Party, thought that "linking the presidential election with a reconciliation that would be reached in advance by the Lebanese people was a condition that could not be met." He regarded Minister Nabih Birri's threat to delay the election—Mr Birri is president of the Amal Movement—to be a position for which there can be only two explanations. "First, Mr Birri's stance was a deliberate effort to create a constitutional vacuum. Second, it was a stance to prolong the current president's term in office."

In a statement given yesterday in response to a recent statement made by Minister Birri in which Birri said, "A presidential election would not be held unless reconciliation is achieved among the Lebanese people," Sham'un stated, "It is astonishing that an official would take such irresponsible positions. It is obvious that something is being implied here, and that whatever it is can only be explained by regarding such a statement as tantamount to adding fuel to the fire to impede all the efforts which have recently been made to find a solution to the Lebanese question. Accordingly, the only justification for the statements Minister Birri makes every now and then is that he is making statements suggested to him by Damascus."

Sham'un thought that "linking the presidential election to a reconciliation which the Lebanese people would reach before the election was a condition that could not be met. This condition was set by those who have been impeding this reconciliation, and although the statement itself is valid, its intent is not. All the Lebanese people want reconciliation: we pray for it; we work for it; and we try to remove all obstacles which are keeping us from achieving it. But this reconciliation is a national question that is associated with the development of political and social conditions. Sincere people cannot talk about reconciliation while setting controversial conditions for it that bring an end to any hope for the reconciliation which is being sought. That is why Minister Birri must observe logic and moderation if he is that enthusiastic about intra-Lebanese reconciliation. Reconciliation requires strenuous, serious, and sincere efforts which must be made concurrently with a national mode of action that changes and evolves. Political and social action is to be modernized, and the spirit of fragmentation and division is to be brought to an end. Disputes which are reinforced by chaos will not last forever. We will find an inevitable end to those disputes with the help of sincere Lebanese citizens, and we hope Minister Birri will be one of those."

Sham'un added, "We want to know what Minister Birri really means by making such statements. We especially want to know what he means by the threat to delay the

first presidential election. There can be only two interpretations for such a position. First, Birri might be engaged in a deliberate attempt to create a constitutional vacuum and, consequently, cause the country's disintegration and total economic collapse. Second, he might be interested in extending the current president's term in office."

Sham'un said, "This would be the natural outcome of placing obstacles and setting conditions for the presidential election in Lebanon. Does politics offer any other interpretation which Minister Birri might be able to share with us? We are asking him for a thorough and unequivocal explanation. We are asking him for a solution to the riddles he sets forth in his statements."

In another statement Sham'un commented on the fact that the U.S. Congress had voted to provide Lebanon with half the wheat and rice it needs. To Sham'un that vote constituted "moral and political support for Lebanon. Coming from a superpower, such an expression of support indicates that this country will survive and that its people have the legitimate right to live an honorable, decent life."

Sham'un called upon all friendly and fraternal countries "to do their positive part for Lebanon to help extricate it from the predicament which has been threatening it for the past 13 years. This is the least that can be asked from peace-loving countries with deep-seated democratic traditions."

08592

Council of Patriarchs and Bishops Discusses Economic Situation

44040073b Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 25 Nov 87 p 3

[Article: "Annual Meeting of Council of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops: Safir: 'Our Conditions Are the Worst That Citizens of Any Country Have Experienced,' Angeloni: 'The Pope Is Aware of Your Crisis and Its Complexities'"]

[Text] The downfall of Lebanon's economy and the social effects of that downfall as well as the serious costs which will have to be paid in the future were two prominent topics which the Council of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops dealt with during the opening session of the council's annual meeting which was held yesterday in the monastery of Our Lady (al-Luwayzah) in (Dhawq Misbah).

The two topics were discussed in two addresses: one was delivered by the Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Butrus Safir, president of the council, and the other was delivered by Luciano Angeloni, the Vatican's ambassador and Pope John Paul the Second's representative.

The Council of Patriarchs and Bishops was convened for business at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was chaired by Patriarch Safir, and it was attended by Angeloni; by Maximus Hakim the Fifth, patriarch of the Roman Catholics; by Maronite and Catholic bishops; and by the general directors of monastic orders.

Patriarch Antun Hayik the Second, the Syrian Catholics' patriarch did not attend the meeting because his brother had died. Patriarch Yuhanna Butrus Kasparian the Eighteenth did not attend the meeting because he had been traveling.

Safir's Address

Safir delivered the following address after the prayer service: "It is regrettable that our social, political, and economic conditions have grown worse since our last council meeting which was held last year. We do not find it necessary to describe in great detail what has become of conditions here in the interim.

"Social conditions have created a rift between people. The wealthy, who are a minority, took care of their own affairs. They moved their money and placed it where its purchasing power would not be lost. Or, let's say, they converted their cash, which was in the national currency, to another currency. Now the national currency is not being used in the country for which it was minted. This is the worst thing that can happen to a country. Isn't the national currency like a country's flag? Doesn't it symbolize a country's confidence and dignity? If conditions remain unchanged and lack of confidence in the country's basic elements persists, then misery lies ahead.

"Suffice it to say that political conditions are the worst to be experienced by the citizens of any country. The government is paralyzed. For almost 2 years members of the government have not met to consider the daily affairs of people's lives. Is it reasonable to have a society where there are no officials responsible for managing its affairs? And yet, despite the threats and dangers they face in crossing road blocks, citizens living in the east and in the west rush eagerly and happily toward each other as soon as these road blocks are removed and opened. The best evidence that the people want to coexist and live together can be seen in the election which was held by the Bar Association, which is one of society's most sophisticated groups of people. Voters came from everywhere, and they met for many hours in a friendly atmosphere of sincere cooperation. Another example of the people's wish to coexist was the general strike which preceded the Bar Association's election. In that general strike all citizens expressed their wish to restore previous conditions. They wanted a country whose affairs would be managed by a unified government, not by organizations or militias that burden people with responsibilities they cannot tolerate. The march which was staged by handicapped Muslims and Christians made a blatant statement against the fighting which had caused the handicaps which the marchers have to suffer from for the rest

of their lives. Despite all obstacles, the people have spoken: they are asking for nothing more than an end to the enormous tragedy which they can no longer tolerate.

"The best indication of what economic conditions are like is the fact that the Lebanese pound has lost over 120 percent of its purchasing power since the beginning of this year. This is according to calculations made by people who are knowledgeable about such matters. Today, most people cannot secure their own daily bread. They cannot provide clothing and schooling for their children, and they cannot afford medication for the sick. Some people are beginning to suffer from malnutrition, and they fear contagious diseases. Can such conditions go on? Does it make sense that people should starve to death because amendments and reforms which have been called for have not yet been carried out?

"What can the church do? It is the duty of the church in such a tragic situation to stand up for the weak and to strengthen the resolve of the oppressed. The church should help people overcome the predicament. Wasn't that what Jesus Christ did? 'When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd' (Matthew 9:36). We can only thank all the clergy and lay people who work in the social field and who devote some of their time to serve their fellowman in humanitarian institutions, relief agencies, charitable societies, and particularly Lebanon's Caritas League, which is a product of this council. We are taking this opportunity to ask those clergy and lay people in the name of Christian brotherhood, or rather in the name of humanity, to spare no effort in extending a helping hand to all those who need help. We ask them to make no distinctions, and we ask them not to discriminate among people of various religious or social affiliations. When hit by a catastrophe, people should unite and come together; they must not become separated and divided. This is what we should do if we know how to join each other in solidarity and unite against the disasters and harsh experiences we have to face. If solidarity is a must among citizens of the same country, it is even more so when crises strike.

"We wish to ask our children and our brothers who manage the affairs of Catholic schools to continue their good efforts to ensure the means by which all students attending their schools can learn despite the financial difficulties everyone is experiencing. Needless to say, education in Lebanon is the country's only resource; it is one of its chief distinguishing features. If Lebanon loses that, it may lose some of what it needs to survive.

"It behooves us to extend our thanks to local churches in Europe which expressed their solidarity with all citizens of Lebanon in their predicament. We have confirmation of that support, particularly from Italy and France where we spent a few days. What we found out, particularly from some pastors who are involved in humanitarian aid, is that many parishioners who are not wealthy manage without some of the things they need so they can

send us money. One of them told us that many young people ask their friends not to give them wedding gifts and to send the value of the gifts to Lebanon. This is truly a model of humanitarian Christian solidarity.

"Honorable fathers, you know that while attending the synod of Roman Catholic Bishops we and our fellow patriarchs took that opportunity to call attention to the Lebanese question. We asked our fellow bishops, who had come from all parts of the world, to consider the Lebanese question, to join us in solidarity, and to pray with us. We believe that prayer is the best weapon in times of difficulty. We all met with His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second, and we presented during that meeting the developments of the Lebanese tragedy which His Holiness has been following closely with his prayers, his concern, and his continuing interest.

"You also know, honorable fathers, that while we were in Rome, our participation in the activities of the Synod of Bishops was interrupted so we could go to the Soviet Union. His Holiness Patriarch Beaman, the patriarch of Moscow and all of Russia, had invited us to go there. It was an opportunity for us to learn about the Russian orthodox church and to acquaint church officials there with our Maronite Church and our eastern churches in Lebanon. It is no secret that in the age of ecumenism six meetings were held between the Russian Church and the Catholic Church. The most recent such meeting was held in Venice where delegations from both churches met in the middle of last October. We were to meet with high level officials in those countries, and we asked them to use their influence in the world and in the region to help us restore peace. They listened to us, and they promised to do what is required in that regard.

"Together with some of our fellow bishops we had an opportunity to visit civilian officials in Rome, and we thanked them for the humanitarian assistance they have been giving us. We thanked them for the care they have been giving Lebanese university students to enable them to complete their studies. Then early this month we went to Lourdes where we had been invited to meet with the bishops of France who were holding their annual meeting. We told them about Lebanon's tragedy, and we explained to them its ramifications and complexities. We found out that their parishioners sympathize and empathize with Lebanon and its tragedy. A public opinion poll had shown that among nine countries suffering from wars similar to those in Lebanon, Lebanon was the first on the list of countries the French people were interested in. In Paris we were to meet with officials whose support for Lebanon has been steadfast. We met with many Lebanese citizens, Muslims and Christians, all of whom were anxious to go back to their country. What they want from the bottom of their heart is to go back to a Lebanon in which peace has been restored. We thanked the church, the state, and the French people for their humanitarian and cultural assistance to us.

"Wherever we went, we made ourselves available for interviews with the press. We also made ourselves available for radio and television interviews to remind people of Lebanon's tragedy. People are getting tired of this problem because it has persisted for a long period of time and because other problems have arisen. These problems require attention so that threats to world peace can be avoided. Among other things we said that Lebanon has relied on assistance from the superpowers throughout its tortuous history to help it find its way out of a predicament. This is especially pertinent since what is happening on Lebanese territory was not caused by the Lebanese. What is happening in Lebanon was rather caused by people who have designs, schemes, and hidden agendas. What is happening in Lebanon was caused by people who paralyze the nation's will and prevent its expression.

"Honorable fathers and fellow clergymen: as we look around we find ourselves enveloped in darkness and tossed by a storm which threatens to drown us. That was the condition the disciples were in when they were in a boat. 'And a great storm of wind arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern asleep on the cushion; and they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" (Mark 4: 35-41).'

"Our faith in God, in our country, our values, our history, our heritage, our traditions, and in our mission in this disturbed east must be the kind of faith that saves and redeems. That was the kind of faith which sustained our fathers and grandfathers for centuries when they went through what we are going through. Their steadfastness was not their own, but it was derived from the power of God Who 'did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control' (2 Timothy 1:7). Our faith makes it incumbent upon us to let go of hatreds, to put an end to disputes, to put out the fires of anger and not to get burned by them. Our faith makes it incumbent upon us to refrain from mentioning conspiracies and assassinations which are as far as they can be from the precepts of Jesus Christ and the practices of Christians. Our faith makes it incumbent upon us to close our ranks and to join each other in solidarity to do good so that all of us together can overcome the predicament and unify the vision regarding our country's future. We want to keep our country and give our children an example of what fellow countrymen can do to preserve their common human values. When we have the same wishes and when we all agree on reform, God will give us the strength and the power to achieve the goals and objectives we seek. Did He not say, blessed be His name, 'For where two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in the midst of them' (Matthew 18:20)?

"With the confidence children have in their mother, we turn in this year of the Virgin Mary to the Virgin Mary, the mother of God and our mother, and we ask her to ask

her son to purify our hearts and enlighten our minds so that our fellow citizens can join us in trying to find out what we need to do to save ourselves from our predicament and continue making progress together in a country of our choosing—a country that was sought by those who were here before us and who gave up their innocent lives in their quest for a country that has faith in God and in spiritual and human values. The country we seek is a country of justice, equality, affection, and peace.”

Angeloni's Address

Then, the papal ambassador, Monsignor Luciano Angeloni, delivered an address whose text follows:

“I am always delighted to accept an invitation from his eminence, the president of this council, to participate in the opening session of the annual meeting. To me this is an occasion I cherish: an occasion in which I meet with your excellencies, as you tend your flocks, evaluate the events of the hour, and, at the same time, examine the future's mysterious prospects. I have the honor of conveying to you the feelings of appreciation and affection which His Holiness, the Pope, harbors for each and every one of you. To those feelings allow me to add the most sincere expressions of brotherhood and respect that I have for all of you.

“Their excellencies the patriarchs have undoubtedly reaffirmed to you His Holiness the Pope's interest in your churches and in Lebanon. The meetings they had with His Holiness when the Synod of Bishops was in session were characterized by heartfelt affection.

“Honorable brothers: It is no secret to you that His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second is always aware of problems whose complexities are a matter of concern to you. These problems, for which you have been trying hard to find solutions, are becoming more involved and more difficult with each passing day. For a long time this has been confirmed in His Holiness's repeated letters to you and to all the people of Lebanon. These letters which His Holiness sent to you are just like those he sends to all Christians in the world. Ever since the dawn of independence in Lebanon, Christ's representative has focused the light of spiritual and moral principles on such problems. Those principles would help us achieve the solution which is being sought. Allow me to go back and refer to those words spoken in 1947 by Pope Pius the Twelfth when he received Lebanon's first representative to the Vatican.

“Your Eminence, Mr President: yesterday you insisted that your faithful people were determined to stay within the Muslim world so they can bear witness to the affection which is preached by the Bible. This ‘ecclesiastical’ presence, as it is referred to in the address of His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second, was discussed with great emotion by Pope Pius the Twelfth. Pope Pius the Twelfth said, ‘With its ethnic and linguistic diversity your country resembles an eagle whose wings glisten with

innumerable colors when Ezekiel beheld him hovering in the sky over Lebanon.’ (Ezekiel 31:7) Lebanon is a country singled out by God for a unique mission. In it the gentlest fraternal partnership in existence is to be achieved among people who have different roots and concepts. Doesn't this living example of valuable fraternal feelings seem to embody a common good for everyone? Doesn't its intent seem honorable, and doesn't it succeed in its intent in the midst of continuous disturbances in the Middle East region? Aren't these expressions which define justifications for the Christian presence the same ones that accompany the inquiries you are pursuing in this meeting?

“Your interest in reconsidering the organization of your council after the experience of past years will only make your work in the council more effective and more powerful. The problems of the hour which you are considering require urgent solutions, and all of them are linked together. The Lebanese people do not want political tendencies, regardless of their origin, to separate them from each other and dissipate their human values because that would be extremely harmful for Lebanon.

“It was on the basis of these values that His Holiness the Pope placed the confidence he had in the Lebanese state, which had recently become independent. The newly independent state had offered the Pope sufficient guarantees. Specifically, that meant freedom of worship, freedom to disseminate religious education, freedom from impediments in applying church laws, protection for Christian families, and the freedom to raise young Christians practically and morally in a manner that is compatible with the church's precepts. The Pope's predecessor, Pope Pius the Eleventh, had stressed educational freedom in his universal message, entitled, ‘This Divine Teacher.’ The Pope had proclaimed this message was based on man's noblest values. At the same time the Pope had proclaimed that the spiritual glory of a Catholic school lies in the fact that in any democratic system a Catholic school guarantees freedom of religion as well as parents' rights. A Catholic school becomes a melting pot in which citizens' unity is forged, regardless of their pluralism. A Catholic school strengthens citizens' unity regardless of changing circumstances. In its noble mission the Catholic school enjoys the same sanctity that the church itself enjoys.

“It is no wonder then, honorable brothers, that the representative of His Holiness the Pope in Lebanon would follow with great interest and profound emotion the developments of the crisis which is of concern to you. It is a crisis whose roots today are steeped in the deteriorating economic situation which is threatening to undermine and destroy the noblest values and liberties for which Lebanon has become famous. As I listen quite attentively to all your studies and research, I pray that God guide and support you and enable your council to strengthen and reinforce the presence of Christians and of the church. That is how a tide of affection and

sincerity can be guaranteed. Christians and their non-Christian fellow citizens can agree about what Pope Pius the Twelfth had said, and they can be influenced by it: 'What we have to do today is take stock of our noble moral values rather than take stock of the material forces and resources we have.'

"That is the certain way by means of which Lebanon can attain the peace it seeks and regain its role as champion and defender of human rights. This is what Pope Pius the Twelfth referred to when he said, 'People's progress or their decline depends upon the outcome of the ongoing struggle to strengthen the rule of truth and fairness.' May it be God's wish that in such a conflict Lebanon can advance to the highest levels of peace and prosperity.

"This being the Virgin Mary's holy year, I would like to conclude my comments by joining you in asking the Mother of God, the Lady of Lebanon, who has always looked after this country's destiny, to intercede on behalf of this country as it faces the most dangerous storm in its history. As we stand in need of having our hopes strengthened, I would like to refer to a song which St. Bernard sang to the Virgin Mary: 'The Morning Star' and 'The Star of the Seas.' 'When the wind blows, when boats are tossed by the waves, and when destruction seems imminent, I set my sights on the star of the seas and look up to the morning star. Deliverance soon follows.' St. Bernard sang this song in praise of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.

"It gives me much happiness, honorable brothers, to join you in your spiritual appeal to the Lady of Lebanon. I am delighted to join you in asking her to crown your efforts with the best of results so that Lebanon may be delivered."

The Statement

The closed session, which lasted till 12:30, began after that. At the end of that session Monsignor Ignathius Maron, secretary general of the council issued the following statement:

"Patriarch Safir reviewed the various aspects of the current situation during the opening session, and the meaning of the address which was delivered by Monsignor Luciano Angeloni, the papal ambassador, was discussed. Afterwards, the conferees considered and approved the proposed agenda for the meeting. The conferees then reviewed the current situation. Bishop Emile Bulus Sa'adah presented a brief report on the economic decline and its social effects. The fathers focused their attention on current political affairs and on the serious costs which will have to be paid in the future. They spent time considering in particular the subject of transferring land ownership, which poses a bigger threat than the population's migration does.

"In the coming days the fathers will consider the matter of renewing the council's bylaws to strengthen the council's effectiveness in a manner that is consistent with continuing developments in all fields. Next Thursday the council will deal with the crisis of education and the dangers which are threatening the Catholic school in Lebanon. On the following day the council will deal with the subject of the Christian presence in Lebanon: that of the Christian community and the church.

"A committee has been formed to draft the council's final communique in the hope that the council's meetings will be adjourned next Saturday. The council will resume its business meetings at 9:30 tomorrow morning."

08592

Magazine Warns Muslims: Western Woman Is 'Slave', 'Commodity'

44040064 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 29 Nov 87 p 3

[Article: "Women Between Progress and Backwardness"]

[Text] The calls for the liberation of women and for equality between men and women are almost deafening. The organs of political propaganda and the press are, in turn, dishing out generous quantities in this vein, with women turning into human beings of a different entity—no longer the weaker sex that is powerless to do anything and with men becoming the powerful and dominant force.

The new trend of the century is depicting the tragic saga of women, the suppressed and powerless human beings straining under the yoke of enslavement and repression by a society which recognizes the role of women only within the framework of production and reproduction processes. The blame for this injustice and oppression is placed on the shoulders of men who have exploited and who continue to exploit women in the ugliest manner, turning them from human entities into mere corporeal bodies stripped of all sublime values and ideals and conceptualized as swarming with the snakes of the taboo and the demons of lust. Consequently, this entity—woman—has turned into an artificial model and an industrial product or, to put it more aptly, into a carrier and a marketing agent of western consumer-oriented production. Women can play the primary role in the marketing and consumption of cars, clothing, food, beverages and all kinds of western products. The prevalent fashion has turned women into an instrument which proliferates the new product when women appear as "fashion models" to be emulated. When fellow women wear whatever a model wears by the force of imitation and of fascination with the western fashion made for the year, all women turn into "fashion models" submitting to the sway of style and advocating the new mode. Consequently, the new fashion turns into a law which imposes itself on society. But fashion could not

turn into law if there were no people willing to obey this law, if there were no women who accepted it. As sociologists say, women obey this annually renewed law and become its captives.

Western fashion and furniture thus enter our homes and entrench in our society a new way of life which carries with it western values and beliefs. In all this, the woman is a pioneer in emulating the foreign model. (The Arab intellect has also turned into a box into which the western technology dumps its latest consumer products. Numerous critics have underlined the Arab Islamic mind's fascination with the western myth of "modernism" and development. This has made us captives of our new beliefs and of the image copied from the west).

'Damaged Veil'

The latest fashion is the fashion of the 'damaged' veil—a veil which compromises the Muslim woman's dress and chastity. This new veil has turned into a prevalent social phenomenon. We often notice that the 'skirt' with a slit in its lower part—a skirt introduced by the western fashion-designer—has become a law and a fashion which contradicts Islamic values and which tries to deface the legitimate Islamic uniform. The west has been able to enter our Islamic society through the fashion door. Even though fashion designers have not been able to totally replace the Islamic uniform, they have been able to penetrate "ladies'" hearts and minds.

In their dress and apparel, in their furniture and in their way of life, women have followed the west's law and society's convention laws which depict women as a sex object, as a statue, as an image and as an icon and which sing the praises of women's charms. Women accept what the west accepts, wear what the west loves and admires, speak the language of the west and address what the west addresses. What is more, women continue to thirst for the values immortalized by the west.

Beauty contests are turned into a value, evening parties are organized, millions are spent and prominent officials and art and press figures attend such parties. Moreover, the printed and visual media report such important "events" prominently and women turn into beauty queens who dazzle other women. Even political figures condone such tradition and contests. The latest such blessing was given by Reagan when he crowned Miss USA, (a black woman).

Even for political women, their beauty may precede their politics. By virtue of being women, their womanhood may turn into a test and a news item. For example, when it was reported that Aquino, the president of the Philippines, threw herself under her bed in fear when she heard the shooting which heralded a coup attempt against her, the report created an uproar in the entire world press. Aquino, who denied the report, nearly died of anger and unleashed her wrath on the journalist who initiated the report.

Who Is Responsible for Women's Backwardness

In another instance, the picture of Prince Charles' wife has been appearing in the world, Arab and Lebanese press (AL-SAFIR is a forerunner in this area). The cover girl is a beautiful, elegant and bright-smiled model. Inside, HAWWA' shows revealing pictures, often accompanied by reports of no value other than highlighting "beauty" and "decadent fashion."

Newspapers and magazines have persistently followed this course. This is especially true of the women's magazines which see nothing other than elegance and beauty in "society women." These magazines' topics revolve around love and marriage. It suffices to review a few editions of these publications in order to come up with a quick conclusion. Let us review some of these publications' titles: The American First Lady chooses marriage over acting. How Andrew and Sarah Ferguson got married. Princess Diana was the intermediary. Kinds of love. Husband-hunting. Your beauty, lady. How to choose the knight of your dreams.

Women, Commodity Wrapping

From all this, we find that the public opinion's sphere of interest is confined to these "sublime ideals" which have dominated the minds of businessmen and establishments, of propaganda and advertizing experts and of professionals. Moreover, women have been turned into mere pretty wrappings for commodities and into magazine covers that lure the greedy eyes enchanted by the pretty colors and by the beauty of the lovely faces. Women have been turned into an indivisible part of these commodities. Women have become the cover for powders and cosmetics, for periodicals and magazines, for the media and even for television which launches its programs with a pretty face beautified with all kinds of make-up. The pretty woman on the screen adorns herself with all kinds of colors and changes her clothing every day, every hour, every moment.

Now then, where is this liberated woman? This woman has renounced all the values that make her a free human being and has turned into an oppressed slave who follows whims and who does not know the value of her integrity and humanity. This woman demands equality and freedom and points a finger of accusation at men, forgetting the slavery and the shackles she has created for herself. This woman thinks that freedom lies in liberation from religion and from noble customs and traditions. But have western women, who have divorced themselves from their religion and beliefs and disregarded all values, achieved their objective? Society has opened all closed doors to women and has given them nearly absolute freedom. Nevertheless, they are still like the women in our society. Despite the cultural difference, they are still the daughters of beauty, love and jealousy, still the captives of their dream knights and their life-partner and still remote from power, rule, politics, invention and industry.

To Every Muslim Woman

Where to, Muslim woman, where to?

Our religion offers this freedom and dignity but your hearts have become blind and have failed to see the light. Will you, Muslim woman, return to the right path and will you repent someday?

08494

LIBYA

Registration Fee Criticized

45040039b Tripoli AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR in Arabic
7 Dec 87 p 9

[Article by Husayn 'Aqilah al-Warfali: "The Cost of Illiteracy: 200 Dinars"]

[Text] In common parlance illiteracy implies ignorance, that is, the inability to read or write. And yet, illiteracy means the inability to read and write as well as the lack of education.

For many years colonialism imposed both kinds of illiteracy on our Arab homeland, and the effects of that are still evident today. A careful look at illiteracy rates in the Arab homeland reveals that the general rate of illiteracy according to the 1980 census is estimated to be approximately 69 percent. If illiteracy eradication programs are not intensified, the number of illiterate Arabs will be approximately 115 million persons by the year 2000, which is only a few years away.

That percentage figure covers all Arab countries. In Somalia the illiteracy rate is 93.5 percent; in North Yemen it is 91.4 percent; and in Morocco it is 78.5 percent. These percentage figures include males and females. But the illiteracy rate among females is higher. In a number of Arab countries the illiteracy rate for females is 90 percent. When we consider the attention given to education, we find there is one university for half a million Arab students who are between the ages of 20 and 24 and who can attend a university. The studies also indicate that only five percent of Arab students who are enrolled in primary schools and only 37 percent of students who are enrolled in the last year of their secondary education go to a university. This means that the number of students who drop out or who do not complete their education in the Arab homeland is large. That is a grave loss to the Arab economy. It is therefore necessary that schools remain open around the clock. All resources must be made available to those who dropped out of school because that may enable us to succeed in attracting them into the school system, and that may have a favorable effect on the national Arab economy. Since resources in some Arab countries are limited and in others wasted, it is also necessary for Arab countries to strive to achieve an integrated educational system so that Arab students can be admitted into universities.

According to a study cited by Dr Mundhir Salah, only 55 percent of students can attend a university. When we consider the aforementioned figures which indicate that 5 percent of primary school students and 37 percent of secondary school students in the Arab homeland go to a university, we can figure out what the figures for Libya would be. In Libya the drop out rate before the seventies was terrifying because of the economic conditions which Libyan citizens were experiencing. In 1954 the illiteracy rate among males was approximately 74.72 percent; among females it was approximately 97.22 percent. But in 1964 illiteracy among males was approximately 53.39 percent and among females 94.38 percent.

In considering these percentage figures, we will notice that even among those who had the good fortune to get an education, a majority did not go to college. Instead, they went to work.

To avoid talking exclusively about percentages in this discussion, a look at the figures shows that in 1962 the number of students registered in the first grade of primary school was approximately 44,315 students. Approximately 15,694 of those students managed to get to the sixth grade, and at that time that was a significant accomplishment. This means that approximately 28,621 students, or about 64.6 percent of the student body dropped out of school.

During the 1964-1965 academic year the number of students who were registered in the first primary grade was about 53,584 students. By the 1969-1970 academic year approximately 23,308 of those students had managed to get to the sixth grade. Approximately 30,276 students dropped out, and that means 56.5 percent of the student body. Economic conditions had forced thousands of Libyans to drop out of school or made it impossible for them to go. Under these circumstances males in particular went to work as soon as they became 13 years old. They went to work to help their fathers and their families make ends meet.

Intensive programs to eradicate illiteracy were prepared after the great first of September Revolution. These programs, which stayed in step with the rise in the standard of living, led to a decrease in the number of students who were dropping out of school. It was noticeable that our schools, institutes and universities were getting crowded, and that to us was a good sign.

And yet this must not become the only side from which this matter is viewed. Circumstances, the circumstances of life for Libyan Arab citizens, have changed. What we must do now is look at the large number of people who dropped out of school and went to work in the sixties. This is something that we might see very little of at the present time and even in the future.

To us, eradicating illiteracy now does not only mean teaching people how to read and write, but it also means—and that is more important—educating them.

It may be argued that society is not responsible for those who drop out of school and that people are free to do what they please. That is true. But isn't freedom the mother of necessity? Isn't it true that a person's freedom made it necessary for him to drop out of school and attend to his own needs?

Furthermore, we do need to eradicate illiteracy, and we need to educate the thousands who were forced by circumstances to drop out of school. The eradication of illiteracy signifies that progress in management, in the vocations, and in industry will be made. And that, in fact, is what we need.

And yet, despite the broad illiteracy among Arabs, despite the large number of drop-outs, despite the lack of education, and despite the revolution's efforts during the seventies, obstacles were being placed in front of those who wanted to get an education. We started noticing those obstacles last year. Economic conditions were cited as the reason. We don't know what these conditions are which dwell in some people's minds, but it is obvious to anyone who carefully examines the clear statistics that the General Secretariat of the People's Committee for Education and Scientific Research is responsible for putting up these obstacles. Officials in that committee did not even scan the statistics on Arab illiteracy. Perhaps they believe that the Arab society in Libya is now educated and, therefore, does not need to fight the inability to read and write among some people and the lack of education among others.

The first such obstacle was the payment of fees. An evening student had to pay a certain amount of money if he wanted to resume the education he was forced to interrupt for many years during the stage of basic education and secondary education as well. It were as though education officials knew nothing about what was really going on in Libya. "They just want money!" Although financial conditions are cited as the reason for requiring fees, citizens are asked to pay a certain amount immediately and in a lump sum. Since a student in the early stages of education might manage to comply with their demands, education officials tried to place another stumbling block in front of part-time university students who, in spite of all these obstacles, had managed to continue their education until they got to college. I can remember here some citizens who earned a university degree and who are registered now as graduate students. They started out in the classes which were started by the revolution to eradicate illiteracy. Requiring a part-time university student to pay 200 dinars to obtain a university degree is an unexpected stumbling block. A decision about this unexpected measure was made at a meeting of the General People's Committee for Education and Scientific Research which was held in al-Bayda'.

A gate has been installed in front of the entrance to Nasir University. Part-time students are not allowed on campus to take their annual examination unless they have a receipt showing that the sum of 200 dinars was paid to the university.

Let's examine that measure closely to determine if it is justified and what harm it might cause.

We gathered our papers and pens and proceeded to The College of Education at Nasir University where we thought academic officials at the college might explain to us the reasons for this measure. What we found, however, was nothing but statements about what was needed. Some said, "The college does not have a proper broom which can be used to keep the building clean." Another said, "The college does not have a budget. How can we get anything that is even as simple as paper?" Another said—and all these people are responsible professors—"I have not received my salary for 4 months. Why don't you in the press talk about that?" There was nothing we could do but get out of there. That was what we found in the college whose graduates serve society! We had gone to the College of Education to ask what were the reasons for that measure. What we found instead were complaints for which reasons had to be found.

But let's ask this question: Should the funds required to purchase cleaning tools and such items be paid by those who wish to continue their education and become literate? This is what an education official said when we asked him to explain to us the reasons for that: "The number of part-time students is very large." (Underscore that remark!) "But those who take the examination are very few. Students need paper, examination committees, and professors to grade the examination papers, and we have to have money for all that."

Very well, but that does not justify putting obstacles in front of citizens who wish to get an education. We have to provide those citizens with free education.

Strict rules must be put in place so that education does not become a matter of whims. Education must be taken seriously so we would not have such a large number of registered students, as they say, and a small number of students who attend examinations. And if the number of students who take examinations is small, what is this about the amount of paper which is consumed, when we know that part-time students use the paper which they themselves furnish to answer examination questions which are dictated to them? The only thing that the university provides for those students is the teacher who grades their papers. And that is something which a teacher, who is a salaried university professor, has to do. The university does not provide or furnish anything to part-time students. Part-time students are responsible for everything: it is up to them to get the syllabus and the lectures from regular full-time students. Part-time students are even responsible for providing the paper they use to write their answers to examination questions. What is this money then that the university spends on part-time students?

Let us now mention the following equation which might expose the truth about the obstacles which the General Secretariat of the People's Committee for Education and

Scientific Research placed in front of programs for the eradication of illiteracy. These obstacles were also placed in front of citizens who are now continuing their education. The reader can make up his own mind about the following:

"Two students, S1 and S2, went to school and started in the first grade of primary school. Society (the Education Secretariat) decided that a maximum of 6 million dinars would be spent on the education of the two students until they graduate from university. This was the maximum period of time after which a student who graduates can serve society. This is investment capital. Society would spend 3 million dinars on S1, who would continue his education, and 3 million dinars on S2. Society would continue to provide the funds which were earmarked for S1. S2, however, stopped going to school after the sixth grade and went to work. Thus, the sum of money that society was to spend on the education of S2 was not spent, and S2 was now working and providing society with an economic return. Meanwhile, S1 was still a consumer.

"Circumstances improved for S2 after a number of years due to the revolution, and he wanted to go back to the balance of that sum of money which society would have spent on him had he stayed in school. He wanted to resume the education that was denied him because of necessity. Isn't that his right?"

Did the General Secretariat of the People's Committee for Education and Scientific Research spend this money which had been earmarked for S2, had he stayed in school, on someone it had brought from Mars? Let the gentle honorable reader be the judge of that. We hope to receive letters from readers telling us what they think about what was presented to them.

To understand the gravity caused by that measure, we learned with certainty that many part-time university students had stopped their efforts to earn a university degree. The reason for that, as mentioned by most of those we interviewed, is their inability under current economic conditions to pay that sum of money in one day and in cash. Graduate students have to pay 300 dinars each, and it is believed that the office of graduate studies has closed its doors because no one wants to go to graduate school. Is any loss equal to such a loss?

Many questions are being asked, but no one cares and no one answers. Meanwhile, the sign which says pay 200 dinars or remain illiterate stands. Thus, the sum of 200 dinars is now due and payable by anyone who is thinking about continuing his education.

Currency, Other Shortages Said Due to Masses' Greed

45040039a Tripoli AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR in Arabic
7 Dec 87 p 8

[Article: "Women Breed, but Money Does Not"]

[Text] Let's start out by saying that we have nothing in general against the beautification of cities or roads. Nor do we oppose the removal of signs that carry beautiful messages or signs that urge us to produce. We do not oppose signs which use simple and incisive phrases to expose and criticize the corrupt values of the old society as long as they are not ugly, boring, or unpleasant.

Anyway, signs which are "planted" on both sides of the main road can be seen on the road between Tripoli and al-Zawiyah and in other places as well. Observing an easy, plain style that adheres to the rules of public taste is usually what is required on those signs so that the message they carry would give a good impression about the refined choice that was made. However, it is boring and somewhat puzzling to see the same message repeated on those signs with slight variations. On one sign which stands on the side of the road near the automated poultry slaughterhouse, the bold, large letters say: "Chickens lay eggs, but the dinar does not!" The other side of that sign carries another phrase for which there can be no justification, particularly in such a remote, almost unpopulated location. That sign said: "The cleanliness of a city is the foundation upon which respect for law and order rests." Strange indeed! "What city" and "what law and order?"

Generally speaking, we can overlook that or add it to the remaining mistakes which are common. But then another sign looms ahead near a cow farm. The sign near that farm says, "A cow breeds, but money does not." The only thing one can do at this point is grit his teeth and promise himself not to read any more signs even if they were blocking the road, which is not an unusual occurrence. But then one is suddenly struck by a good idea which should complement that marvelous piece of work. The committee which oversees this kind of work and whose aim is to add an esthetic touch to the city and to the country's main roads should make arrangements for an additional number of signs. One of these signs would be installed in front of al-Jala' Maternity Hospital. The large, beautiful script on that sign should say: "Women breed, but money does not." Another sign, which would be installed in front of the rabbit farming project would say, "Rabbits breed, but money does not." A third sign would be placed in front of the committee overseeing the preparation of these signs. It would say, "The committee thinks, but the dinar does not." A fourth would be placed in front of an exercise club, and it would say, "Citizens exercise, but the dinar does not." This can go on and on until everything in all directions would be covered with such signs and we would ultimately prove, in writing of course, that "Money does not breed, does not lay eggs, and does not exercise."

After thinking briefly about the matter, however, we discover that these statements are not true. We discover that these statements are rather turned around. We find that chickens do not lay eggs and cows do not breed because the butcher's knife is always ready to take care of those chickens and cows that try to save themselves from an inevitable fate. Then we find that women too do not breed because they take birth control pills. Women bear no children because they want to keep and preserve their graceful and proportionate figures. There are other reasons why women do not bear children, but we need not mention them here lest what we are trying to say becomes misconstrued or too hard to swallow and live with! We also find that the committee does not think and does not execute, and we find that citizens do not exercise, unless, of course, we consider pushing and shoving the crowds to hoard goods and going to all the consumer stores a form of exercise!

Then we discover that money is the only thing that breeds and multiplies. Money is the only thing that thinks and exercises. It dashes about on its own two feet and thinks on behalf of everybody. If you have any doubts about that, just ask brokers, merchants, and the customers of public and private firms. Ask the "easy" money changers. Ask the customers of al-Hamidiyah Market and the customers of Istanbul Bazaar. Ask the veterans of al-Namlah Market and the veterans of al-Turk Market where anything that is missing in the market can be bought. There, one can also buy or trade anything which cannot be bought or traded anywhere else under any circumstances! Ask the pot-bellied and the very corpulent housewives. I swear you will discover that the dinar does all that and more. It is the dinar alone that gains everyone's respect. Everyone worships the dinar which has replaced morals and values in people's esteem.

Folks, we need a committee to protect public taste from such vulgar and distressing taste.

But until that happens, long live money, the patron of public taste and king of the public road which runs from Tripoli to al-Zawiyah.

08592

Support for Lebanese Nasirist Organization Detailed

45040033 Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic
25 Nov 87 pp 12, 13

[Article by 'Ala'-al-Din Mustafa: "Secrets of Reporting Intelligence Information to Libya: A Dangerous Sabotage Plan behind the Secret Nasirist Organization; Defendants Receive Military Training in Libya and in Lebanon's al-Biq'a Valley"]

[Text] What are the implications of the question of reporting intelligence information to Libya? How were the leads to this case uncovered, and how were those who

were involved in it caught? What were the objectives they were seeking in this destructive plot? What were their secret activities? What is the truth about the secret Nasirist organization which they were using to conceal their intelligence gathering activities? How were the defendants trained in Libya and in Lebanon? What is the role that Libyan intelligence played in that organization? How did security agencies succeed in their surveillance of the organization's movements since its first operation?

One day 2 years ago during the month of Ramadan, the streets of Cairo were quiet as they usually are before sunset during that month just before a cannon shot is fired to signal the proper time for breaking the fast and eating a meal. Cairo residents were making preparations for the evening meal they were about to eat after having fasted for a whole day. It had been a long, hot day in May. While over 10 million Cairenes were thinking about preparations for that evening meal, a small group of young men had something else on their minds. It was peculiar and suspicious. They did not wait for the sound of the cannon shot signaling the proper time for breaking the fast. Instead, they tried to effect their own explosion whose aim was to strike a blow to Egypt's stability.

While Cairenes were enjoying their meal, the sound of a severe and alarming explosion shook the secure area where the Egypt-America International Bank is located. The front of the bank's warehouse was destroyed. Fortunately, no one was injured.

The incident was tantamount to a red warning light urging Egyptian security agencies to intensify their efforts to uncover the mystery behind this incident and expose those who were behind it. Egyptian security agencies acted within the boundaries of the law, and they started gathering information on the circumstances of this incident.

They were able to observe a few persons who had been engaged in suspicious activities. They started gathering leads and making inquiries about these people's activities. Security agencies had started with a few simple leads which they continued to follow one month after the other. Then they discovered that they were facing an organized group of people who were acting in accordance with strict rules and pursuing specific activities. As they intensified their information gathering efforts and made inquiries about that organization and its members, the picture about that organization and its members gradually became clearer. Egyptian security agencies were finding out who was financing that organization and what its goals and objectives were.

How the Conspiracy Was Uncovered!

Defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib, the third defendant in the case, provided the first lead. He was engaged in a few suspicious activities. He had traveled abroad repeatedly

and had taken many trips inside the country to the northern governorates, to Sinai, and to the southern governorates. That attracted the attention of security agencies.

Consequently, he was placed under close surveillance—but he did not know about that. Security agencies would thus be able to find out and identify the people he contacted and the places he frequented. Security agencies wanted to identify the people who visited him or who met with him.

The inquiries established that the defendant, Jamal-al-Din Munib, had left the country early in October 1985 to go to Vienna and Athens. Security agencies found that out as they observed him prepare his papers and make arrangements to go to Vienna and Athens on a mission he did not disclose. He received the necessary visas and the required airline tickets after he was provided with the necessary sums of money to cover his expenses while he was there. In Vienna he met with his co-defendants whose aliases are Mutwalli, Hazim, and 'Ali. [Their real names are] Muhammad 'Awad al-Ghamri, Ahmad Rajab, and Muhammad 'Amir. The men got an entry visa for Yugoslavia. In Vienna they contacted a representative of Libyan intelligence who provided them with tickets on Libyan Airways. They met in Tripoli Airport where a Libyan intelligence officer who had accompanied them on the same flight facilitated the measures for their departure from the airport. They were then transported to al-Wathbah Camp in Libya where they received theoretical and practical training in using and manufacturing explosives. At the end of their trip intelligence agencies used a forged stamp attributed to Yugoslavia to stamp their passports to indicate they had entered that country on the date of their arrival in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, thereby concealing the period of time they had spent in Libya.

The defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib had not traveled alone on that suspicious trip. He was accompanied, as was previously mentioned, by Muhammad 'Awad al-Ghamri, Ahmad Rajab, and Muhammad 'Amir. The three men stayed in Libya for approximately 1 month during which they received training on assembling and disassembling a 9 millimeter gun, a Russian-made machine gun, and a 36-hand grenade. They also received some military and combat training, and they were involved in some theoretical studies concerning "The Green Book." Defendant Munib also asked Libyan officials to teach him how to make a soundless timer for an explosive device. He joined organization members who were with him in studying and summarizing a military book which is published by the Egyptian Military College where it is used to teach students about explosives.

After he and his colleagues returned from their trip, Mr Munib submitted a report on the trip to organization officials. In that report he included the military information and the information about explosives which he had learned.

Defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib considered this mission a failure because he had failed to get sufficient information which he could use to carry out what he had intended to do.

Counselor Muhammad al-Jindi, the public prosecutor, decided to indict 15 defendants who were Mr Munib's accomplices in the case of reporting intelligence information to Libya. The defendants were to be tried by the Supreme State Security Court, and their penalty was to be life in prison or a prison term. In the course of the prosecution's investigation Defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib said that the organization's ideas and goals were talked about and discussed during the organization's meetings. Organization members also talked about how the organization's presence can be established and how new members can be recruited.

Blowing Up the Warehouse of the Misr-America Bank

Defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib stated that 'Ali 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Ali, the second defendant, had informed him that the organization had issued an order for an explosion that was to occur at [the offices of] Trans World Airlines [TWA]. He was charged with the task of inspecting the TWA office and the offices of other firms as well. The first and fourteenth defendants took part in that inspection. The firms that were to be inspected were British Airways, the Misr-America Bank, and the Thomas Cook Bank.

On 29 May 1986, the day designated for carrying out the operation, organization members who were taking part in that operation picked up Mr Munib and accompanied him to the designated targets. Mr Munib and the 13th defendant were to place an explosive charge in front of TWA; the second and 14th defendants were to place a similar explosive charge in front of British Airways; the first and fourth defendants were to place an explosive charge in front of the Misr-America Bank; and the seventh and ninth defendants were to place a charge in front of the Thomas Cook Bank.

The timing devices were set so all the explosives would go off at the same time: the same time the fast was to be broken. However, the charge that had been placed in front of the Misr-America International Bank was the only one that exploded; the remaining charges did not. The defendants then met at the Wimpy Restaurant in al-Jizah where they had their evening meal, and they agreed not to meet for some time after that to prevent exposure.

To Libya: One More Time

According to his confession, the defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib received orders from the organization in September 1986 to go again to Libya. He was provided with the necessary funds, and he did in fact go to Budapest in Hungary, as instructed, where he stayed for a few days until he met with the second, fourth, fifth, ninth, tenth,

eleventh and twelfth defendants. The defendant 'Ali 'Abd-al-Hamid arranged for the men's travel tickets to Libya on Libyan Airways. When they arrived at Tripoli Airport, representatives of Libyan intelligence were waiting for them. They made sure their passports were not stamped with an entry stamp into Libya, and they whisked them away to the Revolutionary al-Wathbah Camp in Tripoli where they underwent military training. They were trained to assemble, disassemble and use weapons, and they were trained to use various kinds of stunning devices, fuses and explosives. During that period the men received a visit from Mustafa al-Za'idi, a Libyan citizen who held a separate meeting with 'Ali 'Abd-al-Hamid. Libyan authorities then prepared Libyan passports for five members of the group who were chosen by 'Ali 'Abd-al-Hamid. They are Jamal-al-Din Munib and the fourth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth defendants. The five were to travel to Syria and Lebanon.

In Lebanon

Accompanied by a Libyan intelligence representative, the five men did in fact fly to Syria on a Libyan Airways airplane. At Tripoli Airport before their departure, defendant Muhammad 'Awad al-Ghamri gave the defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib 500 dollars in travelers checks to cover expenses during his travels. The men stayed in Damascus for some time awaiting permission to go to al-Biq'a Valley in Lebanon, where they actually went. The men stayed in Shtura in a camp that is affiliated with George Habash's PFLP. The military training they received there consisted of theoretical and practical exercises on all kinds of explosives, stunning devices and fuses. The men were taught how these devices were prepared, and they fired many shots in the course of their training.

The men were also involved in security studies, receiving instruction in observation and surveillance and ways to evade same. After approximately 10 days, they returned to Libya where Libyan authorities retrieved the Libyan passports which had been issued to the men and returned to them their original passports. Some of these passports were stamped with a forged Yugoslavian stamp. However, the defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib refused to have this forged Yugoslavian stamp placed in his passport again because he feared exposure. The five men then returned to Cairo.

When they returned to Egypt, the men rented a cottage in Fayid where they held a training course to review the technical information which had been given to them in Libya about explosives and stunning devices.

The defendant confessed that while receiving training in the use of explosives, he had joined many members of the organization in several experiments they conducted on the Cairo-Ismailia Desert Highway. Those experiments had to do with using a remote control device to effect an explosion. That experiment [sic?] was preceded

by two successful experiments which were carried out at Kilometer 29 on the Cairo-Suez Desert Highway and on the Cairo-Ismailia Desert Highway, about 20 kilometers from the Tenth of Ramadan City.

The Remote Control Device

The defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib admitted that the idea of using a remote control device had come to him as he observed children's toys at the Japanese Center. As an electronics engineer he understood the concept of a remote control device in children's toys and he knew it could be developed for use in operations to blow up objects from a distance. Using a remote control device would make the perpetrators' get-away easier.

The defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib demonstrated for the prosecution how the operations which had been carried out on desert highways to detonate explosive devices were executed. Details of the operation were demonstrated in front of Hisham Hammudah, chief prosecutor for the Supreme State Security Court. Mr Munib explained how he utilized his studies as an engineer and his major area, electronics, in the operation.

The Destruction of Israeli Targets

Egyptian security agencies observed the defendant Jamal-al-Din Munib who was trying to blow up the Israeli bus which runs between Cairo and Israel. He had conducted several inspections of the route traveled by that bus. In that regard Mr Munib took approximately eight reconnaissance trips while the bus was leaving [the station] and returning to it. He wanted to determine the bus's route, its speed, and the times at which it passed those locations which had been designated for executing the operation. He also took reconnaissance trips to the areas frequented by Israeli tourists in the Sinai Peninsula. That was part of the organization's plan to carry out terrorist operations in the country. Mr Munib had received orders from the organization instructing him to accompany the fourteenth defendant and proceed with him to Nuwayba' and Saint Catherine so they could determine the locations where Israeli tourists congregate. But he was unable to tell the Israeli tourists apart from the other tourists who frequent these locations.

Papers and Publications

The witness Hazim Zaki Hamadah, a major in the police force, testified that the investigation which was conducted by State Security Investigating authorities proved that members of the organization had placed the Israeli ambassador's residence in Ma'adi as well as the bus that runs between Egypt and Israel under surveillance. The witness stated that he had seen some of the defendants who are members of the organization last April, and he gave their names. He said they had designated a point on the Suez Road in front of which the bus traveled. They were going to use that point to blow up the bus.

The witness affirmed that Nasirist ideas about socialist Arab unity were used by the organization as the basis for its claim that armed, revolutionary struggle against the existing regime was necessary. The organization claims that the state's policies are not compatible with the Arab unity called for by socialist, Nasirist ideas. These ideas also call for a struggle against capitalist regimes which are represented by the United States of America and Israel. Members of the organization, which is led by 'Ali 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Ali and Salah-al-Din Disuqi, carried out their activities in labor and student gatherings, in the Bar Association, and in the Arab Studies Society.

The Charge of Reporting Intelligence Information to a Foreign Country

The prosecution filed several charges against the defendants who, during the period from 1983 to 5/29/1987, had participated in a criminal conspiracy instigated and managed by the first and second defendants. The purpose of that conspiracy was to work for a foreign country, the Libyan People's Jamahiriyyah. The defendants were to report intelligence information to an individual who works for Libyan interests so that hostile acts can be carried out against Egypt for the purpose of damaging the country's political and economic position and hurting its national interests. The defendants, who were to receive money and benefits for their involvement in that scheme, were also charged with the possession and manufacture of explosives for the purpose of using them in a way that jeopardizes people's lives and property. The following crimes were committed in the execution of this agreement:

The defendants contacted some people who work for the Libyan People's Jamahiriyyah, and they entered into an agreement with them to carry out sabotage activities inside the country. These activities included blowing up and destroying some foreign property and installations as well as some property that is jointly owned by Egyptians. To do that some of the defendants traveled to Libya in groups where they received military training and training in sabotage activities. They were then sent back into the country to carry out their missions.

The defendants acquired and had in their possession a gun, ammunition, explosives, gelatinous dynamite, TNT, tetryl, fulminate, and ammonium nitrate. They acquired these materials for the purpose of disturbing public security. They used explosives and prepared explosive devices which the first and fourth defendants placed on 5/29/1986 at the entrance to the warehouse of the Misr-America International Bank. They placed the explosive device at that location after setting its timing device.

Except for the sixth, seventh and last defendants, they received money and benefits from individuals serving the interests of a foreign country for the purpose of committing harmful acts against Egypt's national interests. In addition, they received tickets to travel abroad as

well as expenses. In return, they were to carry out inside the country sabotage activities which would be detrimental to Egypt's security and peace.

The prosecution accused the first and second defendants of violating the law and establishing, founding, managing, and organizing an illegal party organization whose nature was semi-military. The prosecution charged the two defendants had established that party to oppose the country's main principles. The prosecution also charged that the remaining defendants, excluding the last one who was accused of possessing a gun without a permit, had joined this organization.

Taking Advantage of the Nasirist Tendency

AKHIR SA'AH has learned that Libyan intelligence had taken advantage of the defendants. It used its claim of reinforcing the Nasirist tendency to undermine the country's stability and security.

The defendants were prevented from carrying out other terrorist acts they had intended to carry out because they were apprehended promptly and placed under surveillance after the incident on 29 May 1986 in which the front of the warehouse belonging to the Misr-America International Bank was blown up. The defendants had intended to commit such terrorist acts as attempting to assassinate a few Israeli tourists and blowing up the tourist bus between Egypt and Israel.

AKHIR SA'AH has also learned that from time to time members of the organization would use the International Japan Center on Rameses Street as their own headquarters. Inquiries conducted by security agencies indicated that members of the organization had purchased and assembled explosive materials inside the country because Libyan intelligence agencies had failed in their attempts to smuggle such materials into Egypt. Organization leaders were assigned the task of providing the explosive materials and manufacturing these materials in Egypt. These people had been trained to do that, and they had been trained to manufacture explosive materials. They had received this training in Libya and Lebanon.

[Boxed Articles Follow.]

Defendants in the Secret Organization

—Salah-al-Din Disuqi, 48 years old, director of the Arab Center for Management and Development

—'Ali 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Ali, an attorney and a fugitive

—Jamal-al-Din Munib, engineer

—Muhammad 'Awad al-Ghamri, attorney

—Hafiz al-Sayyid Muhammad, also known as Hafiz Abu-al-Sa'd, a law student

—Yasir Muhammad 'Abd-al-Jawwad, an attorney

—Ahmad al-Sayyid al-Sawi, assistant instructor at the College of Archeology, Cairo University

—Muhammad Sha'ban Muhammad, an attorney and a fugitive

—Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Ali, an attorney and a fugitive

—Ahmad 'Abd-al-Mu'ti Mahmud, a student of law at Cairo University and a fugitive

—Mustafa Yasin Barakat, a student and a fugitive

—Ahmad Muhammad Ahmad, a student and a fugitive

—Muhammad 'Amir 'Ali, an employee of the Academy of Arts and a fugitive

—'Abd-al-Qawi 'Ali Anha, a farmer

Using a Remote Control Device To Blow up an Object

Security agencies revealed that the defendants had used a remote control device to detonate explosive charges from a distance. They did that to make their escape and get-away after an explosion easier. Security agencies also seized the hollowed out trunk of a tree which had been filled with TNT, a highly explosive substance. The tree was found in the home of the defendant Jamal Munib in al-Buhayrah.

Training in Libya and in Lebanon

The investigation conducted by the prosecutor's office indicated that the defendants had received military training in Libya and in Lebanon's al-Biq'a Valley. They were taught how to use and manufacture explosives and incendiary materials, and they were trained in surveillance evasion methods. The defendants conducted field experiments on the desert highways where explosive operations were carried out to ascertain the effectiveness of the explosives which they had manufactured. These experiments were carried out before these materials were actually used in blowing up establishments. The defendant Jamal Munib demonstrated that in front of Hisham Hammudah, chief prosecutor for State Security.

08592

OMAN

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Gulf Policy

44040072 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
5 Dec 87 pp 24-26

[Interview with Oman Minister of Foreign Affairs Mustafa al-'Alawi by Sulayman Nimr in Muscat; Date not Given]

[Text] The anxiety experienced by the Arab Gulf capitals as a result of the escalating Iraq-Iran war's dangers to the region and of the increasingly intense Iranian statements threatening a number of the region's states is somewhat absent in the Sultanate of Oman even though the Chinese-made Silkworm missiles deployed by Tehran on the eastern side of the Strait of Hormuz are no more than a five-minute flight from the sultanate and even though the ships of the foreign fleets stand across the Omani coast, especially at the Strait of Hormuz whose western side is controlled by Oman.

But the "absence of anxiety" over the intensifying Gulf war does not mean that the Omanis are not concerned with or interested in the developments occurring in the area. The sultanate's strategic geographic location compels it to be interested not only in Gulf developments but also in the events taking place around the Gulf, whether in the Arab Peninsula, Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iran.

Gulf diplomats in Muscat believe that the "absence of Omani anxiety" over developments of the Iraq-Iran war whose fires have begun to extend to all of the states in the region emanates from the success of the Omani diplomacy, founded on the principle of "self-interest first," in establishing with Iran good relations that encourage the Omanis to feel reassured that they are beyond Iran's threats to the states in the region. However, Yusuf al-'Alawi, Oman's minister of state for foreign affairs, has said: "We are concerned with the developments in the area. But in our political steps, we are try to act calmly and we are careful not to tackle matters impulsively and not to reflect this concern in our daily actions and in our media. This is why one cannot actually sense feelings of anxiety in the sultanate, whether among officials or ordinary citizens."

During our interview with Minister al-'Alawi at his home, which overlooks the Arab Sea coast, in the al-Sayb area in Muscat, we asked:

[Question] But it seems that your policy of steering clear off and avoiding problems is what gives you reassurance that Iran's threats against some of the GCC member states will not reach you?

[Answer] The constant policy charted for us by His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id is in fact a policy of "considering the sultanate's interest first." To translate this policy, we do not tackle developments and dangers impulsively. When the war started, we were the people

most concerned. When the war escalated, our concern intensified. But we have tackled all the developments calmly and we have refrained from making statements or declarations that contribute to intensifying matters. We overlook the most dangerous strategic point in the area—a point where a serious conflict can erupt. Yet, we deal with all the parties calmly and realistically.

[Question] At a time when Iran is attacking a member of the GCC, of which you are also a member, and when Iran has threatened and continues to threaten the security of another GCC member (Saudi Arabia), we find your contacts with Tehran increasing and your "good" relations with Iran are improving. Are you not to be faulted for this?

[Answer] We fully believe in the dialogue and good-neighbor policy among us as GCC members and between us and our neighbors, especially Iran. With this in mind, we establish our relations with Iran and work to eliminate the conditions and the dangers in the region. The Iranian government is aware of this. In Tehran, they formulate their policies and they act in accordance with these considerations and not anarchically, as some people think. If the dialogue and good-neighbor policy reflects the presence of good relations between us and Iran, then we also exert efforts for the development of good-neighbor relations between Iran and all of the states in the region.

[Question] But Iran is the party which has attacked Kuwait and the party which has threatened the security of the holy sites in Saudi Arabia, not vice versa?

[Answer] The Iranians say that they have reasons for the acts they have committed against Kuwait. These reasons are well known and are attributed to Kuwait's support for Iraq, as they say in Tehran. We can understand the circumstances that make Kuwait take its well-known position on the Iraq-Iran war. They are circumstances created by Kuwait's geographic and demographic reality. We have told the Iranians that this issue cannot be tackled by escalating the situation and striking Kuwait. When we discussed with them the incidents which occurred in the holy Mecca, the Iranians said that they had not wanted matters to develop in that manner. Regardless of the causes and justifications of what is happening, we familiarize ourselves with the Iranian viewpoints and convey our viewpoints to the Iranians through our contacts with them. This is something that helps the situation in the region. In Muscat, we believe that the objective to which we must cling and which we must seek to achieve is the objective of searching through all means for a way to end the tension in the region and to develop cooperation and harmony between Iran and the states in the region.

[Question] But after 7 years of the GCC member states' policy which is founded on calming the situation and opening the bridges of dialogue, don't you think that Iran continues to resort to escalating the war and tension in the region?

[Answer] Regardless of how tense the conditions become and of how many explosive elements are introduced into the region, we must try to calm the situation. We may disagree with Tehran or with others and we may have our own interpretations on the reasons and causes of the tension, but these disagreements and interpretations must not divert us from our endeavor to end the tension. This is in the area's interest. We can say that we have tried and we have exerted utmost efforts but have achieved no important accomplishment. But we believe that we must continue to look for and pursue positive means to alleviate the tension and to put an end to attempts to create a state of hostility between the states in the region and Iran because we have no alternative to this approach.

[Question] Some people in the Arab Gulf states believe that the alternative is to put some sort of political pressure on Iran, especially in the wake of the failure of the policy of dialogue and pacification with Iran?

[Answer] What is the objective for all of us? It is to end the region's state of tension and escalation so as to achieve the main objective of ending the war. There may be a difference of views on the means and methods to achieve this end. We have discussed this issue in the GCC and it is our viewpoint that severing the dialogue and terminating the contacts with Iran entail dangers for the region. Why do you want us to engage in a policy of pressure exertion? To persuade Iran? What practical means do we possess to apply such pressure, not just in the media? As Arab states, and particularly as Gulf states, we have almost no means of pressure to use. We in the Gulf have joint interests with Iran, the most significant of which is the good-neighbor interest. If we do possess means of power to put pressure on Iran, then using these means entails a number of dangers. We believe that we should not create justifications for antagonizing and confronting Iran.

[Question] Isn't the attack on an Arab Gulf state a justification for confrontation?

[Answer] If we embark on a confrontation, would this confrontation end the strikes against this Gulf state? Pressure and confrontation will escalate the war and will not prevent Iran from continuing its strikes against this Gulf state. We are not the only states neighboring Iran. There is a superpower neighboring Iran and the differences between this superpower, namely the Soviet Union, and Iran greatly exceed the differences between the Gulf states and Iran. Has the Soviet Union resorted to the policy of confrontation and force against Iran?

[Question] But Iran is in a state of war with Iraq and it refuses to end this war whereas it is not in a state of war with the Soviet Union?

[Answer] There is, of course, a crushing war between Iran and Iraq. We have tried and continue to try with all our might to end this war. Whoever wants to bolster and

support Iraq must do all he can to find a means to end this war because Iraq's main objective is to end this war. When I make a comparison between us as Gulf states which have relations and joint interests with Iran and other countries neighboring Iran and when I cite how these countries, such as the Soviet Union, act toward Iran, I am only trying to say that the best means to tackle the escalation and tension in the region is to develop cooperation with Iran in order to end this devastating war.

[Question] But Iran is the party that shuts all doors of cooperation with the states in the region?

[Answer] There is a state of distrust which we must eliminate first.

[Question] The price is for the Arab Gulf states to take a neutral position? Isn't it so?

[Answer] Not exactly. Who says that we want to be a party to the war? We want to exert efforts to end this war. It is our opinion that calming the situation in the region first and then developing cooperation between Iran and the GCC member states is likely to contribute to ending the war.

[Question] Some people believe that an Arab and Gulf position supporting Iraq is one of the means of pressure to persuade Iran to end its war against Iraq?

[Answer] Supporting Iraq within a collective Arab position is something else. Nobody objects to such a position. But we must not try to antagonize Iran through pressures.

Not for Publication

We embarked on a lengthy dialogue on this point with the Omani minister of state for foreign affairs. The minister believes that it is better not to publish this dialogue, but not in order to conceal the true Omani position because the Omani position on the issue of relations with Tehran is well known to the other Arab Gulf parties concerned and to the Arab countries, especially to Iraq. The most significant manifestations of this position are perhaps embodied in Oman's continued contacts with Tehran, the latest of which was Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati's second visit to Muscat at the beginning of last November. During this visit, Minister Velayati announced his country's agreement to send a representative to New York to discuss with U.N. Secretary General De Cuellar the means to implement Security Council resolution No 598. In Oman, they consider this to be positive progress in the Iranian position, even though Tehran has announced that it continues to cling to its conditions for agreeing to implement the Security Council resolution. In Oman,

they say the declaration the Iranians made in Muscat was not a coincidence and that it came about only as a result of the dialogue and contact policy Oman has adopted toward Iran.

If the issue of Omani relations and contacts with Iran is controversial in some Gulf capitals, then the controversy has its importance because most of the Gulf officials believe that these relations and contacts signify an alteration and a change in the sultanate's policy. In this regard, the officials point out that Oman's position at the outset of the war was strongly supportive of Iraq. It is no secret that when Iraq began to acquire weapons from Egypt, it enlisted the help of the Sultanate of Oman as an intermediary with Egypt during al-Sadat's administration. What is more, the price of the weapons was paid to Egypt by way of Oman. But they say in Muscat that their relations with Tehran seem to be new these days because Iran's relations with a number of GCC member states are tense, poor and nearly severed (what is meant here are the relations with Riyadh and Kuwait). They also say in Oman that the policy of dialogue and contact with Tehran was approved by the 1985 GCC summit which convened in Muscat. They further say that this policy has produced numerous positive developments. A high-level Omani source has revealed to AL-MUSTAQBAL that Oman's contacts with Tehran have had a positive impact on the tension between Kuwait and Tehran and that Oman has obtained Iranian promises that Kuwait will not be struck with missiles again. Moreover, Oman's contacts with Iran have often dealt with the high tension developing in Saudi-Iranian relations in the wake of the Mecca incidents. The official Iranian position Tehran has conveyed to Muscat on these incidents is, to put it briefly, that there are certain Iranian parties in whose interest it is to further intensify the relations with Riyadh.

[Question] When asked if Oman's eagerness to continue the dialogue and contact with Tehran means that there is an Omani mediation between Kuwait and Iran, Omani Minister of State Yusuf al-'Alawi said:

[Answer] It is not a question of mediation. Nobody has asked us to mediate. We convey the GCC member states', especially Kuwait's, viewpoint to the Iranians and convey the Iranian viewpoint to the GCC member states. It is not our mission to only convey viewpoints but also to express our viewpoints as Omanis on the developments. Here is where the positive nature of the contact policy emerges. If there were no contacts, how would we learn the Iranian viewpoints and how would they learn our viewpoints. During my visit to Tehran last May, we tried to mediate between Kuwait and Tehran—without the request of either country—to prevent a further escalation in the tense relations between them. But it seems that the endeavor failed because it was late.

[Question] In your contacts with Tehran, have you felt any positive change in the Iranian positions on the war and on the situation in the region?

[Answer] Insofar as the war with Iraq is concerned, there is nothing new in their declared and well-known position on this war and on how to implement Security Council resolution 598. But their agreement to dispatch an Iranian representative to negotiate implementation of the Security Council resolution with the U.N. secretary general in the presence of an Iraqi representative is a step we view positively. The ball is now in the court of the U.N. secretary general and the Security Council. As for the Gulf situation and the tanker war, we listen to their viewpoint and acquaint them with the other parties' viewpoint. This in itself is an effort that helps alleviate some causes of the escalating tension.

In Muscat, more than one diplomatic source agrees that the reason for Oman's positive stance toward Tehran is Sultan Qabus' personal view that it is necessary to embrace a balanced policy toward all parties and countries of the world—a policy based on a realistic and rational approach to all developments. The primary mainstay of this policy is dialogue and balance. As Muscat has good relations with the west, especially with Washington and London, it also established relations with the Soviet Union two years ago and these relations have developed to the point where an exchange of ambassadors will be announced officially this month. Muscat has also established relations with South Yemen after a long period of hostility. The sultanate's very good relations with the United States—relations which have reached the level of making facilities in some Omani bases and ports accessible to the U.S. fleet—do not stop the Omanis from saying that the presence of the U.S. fleet, the other western fleets and the Soviet fleet is not in the interest of the states in the region. Minister Yusuf al-'Alawi has told us:

The superpowers have what they consider to be significant interests in Iran and they are not prepared to sacrifice these interests for the sake of the Gulf states. The superpowers tell us words that please us but they act in accordance with what pleases them and serves their interests. When the superpowers came to the area with their fleets, they needed nobody's permission. They only sought justifications and reasons. What happened in the past 6 months has given them these justifications. The presence of the international fleets has turned into an international problem and the question of the departure of these fleets has also turned into a disputed issue between the east and the west. Consequently, the area has entered the current of the international rivalry and the whirlpool of the East West conflict.

These statements by Minister al-'Alawi perhaps explain the position of Oman which is said to have objected to Kuwait's decision to reflag its tankers to insure U.S. protection for these tankers. They say in Muscat that they "were surprised by this decision." From the statements we heard from more than an Omani official, we have felt that they "censure" Kuwait for this step and

that the main reason for this "censure" is that the step is viewed as an independent Kuwaiti step. But Yusuf al-'Alawi, the Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, has said to us:

Kuwait's decision to reflag its tankers in the United States and the subsequent steps came as a Kuwaiti idea intended to protect free navigation in international waters and to saddle the superpowers with the responsibility of protecting the Gulf's international waters. We have a different interpretation which says that the Gulf waters can be protected only with the agreement of all the countries bordering the Gulf. But the difference in our interpretations and viewpoints does not mean the presence of disagreement between us and Kuwait or disagreement within the GCC. This is our distinguishing mark as GCC members. There are interpretations and differences but there is no disagreement that affects the cooperation procession we launched when we established the GCC. We still say that there are others means with which we could protect navigation in the Gulf states because the presence of the superpowers' fleets has plunged us into what we fear, the whirlpool of the international conflict.

[Question] But it seems that the true objective behind the Kuwaiti step is to urge the superpowers to intervene in order to end the Iraq-Iran war by directly exposing these powers to the dangers of this war?

[Answer] We respect this viewpoint, even though we disagree with it. We say that this intervention entails major dangers to the area. We also say that the superpowers will not actually embark on any real and practical steps against Iran and cannot embark on any such steps because they are concerned with their interests in Iran. There is international competition for Iran. We believe that Iran may consider its interest regarding the states in the region if we make it realize that we do not seek to encircle it with a belt of hostility.

[Question] When you gave the U.S. forces facilities in the sultanate, did you not consider the presence of a superpower in the area a step that would help create international rivalry in the area?

[Answer] The facilities issue altogether is exaggerated. We concluded a bilateral agreement with a friendly country, the United States, calling for providing supply and commercial facilities to the forces of the U.S. fleet in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. These facilities do not mean creating a presence because the U.S. fleet is present at the Gulf's gates to start with. Moreover, these facilities provide for staging joint exercises. This is in the interest of our army which will benefit from the U.S. expertise. This agreement does not at all mean tying our policy to the U.S. policy. The proof of this is that we have established relations with the Soviet Union since the treaty was concluded and that we have bolstered our trade relations with eastern block countries. What is more important than all this is that there is a big

difference between facilities and military bases. Military bases mean the permanent presence of foreign forces whereas facilities are temporary and for a limited period of time.

Muscat believes that the primary philosophy behind its policy of balanced foreign relations is founded on the slogan launched years ago by Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id, namely: "Self-reliance and national interest above all else." Therefore, while eager to maintain a balanced policy with all parties in order to steer clear off problems and dangers and not to provide the justifications for others to antagonize the sultanate, Oman is eager to shore up its defenses and defense forces in accordance with its national interests, either through collective cooperation with the GCC member states or through bilateral cooperation with "friendly" countries. This defense plan has nothing, according to an Omani official, to do with the developments of the Iraq-Iran war but is based on the sultanate's strategic geographic location. Therefore, Oman feels that it is responsible for protecting navigation in its territorial waters. This prompts it to strengthen its military defenses, not just in Musandam Peninsula which overlooks the Strait of Hormuz but also internally and in the south.

08494

SAUDI ARABIA

Attitudes of Public Organization Workers Explored

44040068b Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 1 Dec 87 p 9

[Article: "A New Study on the Organizational Climate in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia"]

[Text] The book "The Organizational Climate: An Index of the Efficiency of the Performance of Public Organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" has been issued by the research center at King Sa'ud University. Preparing the study were Dr Sa'ud Ibn Muhammad al-Nimr and Dr Muhammad Sayyid Hamzawi, assistant professors in the Faculty of Administrative Sciences in the university. This study is aimed at:

The system of general organizations, in its function as the suitable formula for accelerating development, in view of the attainment of balance between two variables which might seem contradictory by which this system is characterized. These are:

Oversight of economic activities by the government system to guarantee the realization of the public interest and the goals of development and the protection of public money.

The realization of the independence and flexibility desired for the proper management of economic activities freed from the lengthy procedures and complicated bills followed in government agencies, whether in the

area of decisionmaking and the setting out of administrative plans and systems or in the operating areas of the management of employee affairs, financial aspects and so forth.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the general organizations have played a vital role in taking charge of development planning in the past 2 decades. This has placed a large responsibility on the shoulder of the management of these organizations in completing these plans competently and effectively, and this has assuredly been reflected on all the efforts of economic and social development in the kingdom. Since the establishment of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority on 4 October 1952, the general organizations have kept increasing day by day and their importance and the number of people working in them have increased to the point where they now total more than 35 general organizations.

This study has the aim of reaching agreement on theoretical notions and principles which will deal with means for learning about administrative efficiency in the general organizations in the kingdom and determining how administrative thinking and theories can be subjected to applied tests in practical reality. The goals of the study assume concrete form in main points in this regard, which are:

1. Learning about indices which could give us signs of the efficiency of management of the general organizations in the kingdom.
2. Ascertaining causes which might obstruct the efficiency of management in general organizations.
3. Producing recommendations and proposals which will help administrative leaders in the general organizations in the kingdom limit the negative features of internal management and support the positive aspects in this management.
4. The two researchers also had the goal of trying to close a gap which the Arab literature suffers from in regard to the effective study of the internal management of general organizations in developing countries in general and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular.

In order to realize these goals, eight organizations were chosen arbitrarily from the general organizations operating in the kingdom, in accordance with the following classifications:

Two organizations from the group of economic organizations: the General Electricity Organization and the General Petroleum and Mineral Organization.

Two organizations from the group of educational organizations: King Sa'ud University and the General Technical Education and Vocational Training Organization.

Two organizations from the group of financial organizations, the Real Estate Development Fund and the Saudi Arab Agricultural Bank.

The Institute of Public Management, from the group of administrative and consultative organizations.

The General Social Insurance Organization, from the group of social organizations.

The number of employees chosen at random as a sample for the study came to 430, occupying Grades Six to 10. A questionnaire was distributed to them containing 61 questions dealing with various aspects it was desired to learn about. We distributed the questionnaire over the period from 30 August 1984 to 24 February 1985. The response was good, since the total return of questionnaires was 253, or 58.84 percent. The data was sorted and analyzed by computer, and the study came up with a group of important conclusions, some of which we might mention as follows:

First, as regards the organizational activities within the general organizations, the most important conclusions were:

1. The majority of the individuals in the sample considered that there were clear, simple, specific job procedures for people working in the organization, although a substantial share was not of this opinion (about 25 percent).
2. The relations between the departments and sections may have been determined in most cases, but cooperation and coordination were not at the desired level.
3. Sixty-seven percent of the answers considered that the powers for coping with responsibilities were not adequate, but there remained one third which did not hold the same view.
4. There was difficulty with the flow of data and information among the various sections, departments and decisionmaking centers in the view of a large number of the people who responded to the research work (approximately 42 percent), especially people who had not spent a long period on the job which would enable them to consolidate unofficial relations with work colleagues so that they could obtain the necessary information to complete their job competently.
5. It was also apparent that there was no system for keeping information which could be referred to at time of need, in the view of 50 percent of the individuals in the sample, and, even if one did exist, it was primitive and did not fulfil the purpose.

6. There was an organizational structure in all general organizations, but not enough attention had been given to modernize it and force it to conform to the particular circumstances in each organization in accordance with the environmental changes surrounding it.

Second, as regards job satisfaction in the general organizations, the most important conclusions the study arrived at were:

1. As regards satisfaction with the current job in general, it was apparent that satisfaction existed, although to an average degree, in the opinion of 47.5 percent of the individuals of the sample, while the people who were satisfied to a large degree came to 35 percent. The people satisfied to a small degree came to only 13 percent. The great majority was satisfied if only to an average degree at least.
2. In addition, the element of salary; although 48 percent of the sample assumed average responses, their responses nonetheless prevailed over the people who were to a large extent satisfied with salary by 24 percent. It is noteworthy that the people who found that the salary was not on a par with the type of work they performed came to 27.5 percent of people with university accreditation or master's degrees, which means that the higher the qualifications were, the more the individual's aspirations and ambitions were, and consequently the less their satisfaction.
3. Concerning the relationship between heads and subordinates, these were excellent or good in more than 76 percent of the answers.
4. As regards the dominance of a spirit of cooperation and fraternity among colleagues, 89 percent of the individuals in the sample determined that that dominated to a large or average extent in their organizations.
5. Concerning the rate of work turnover, the majority of the individuals of the sample (about 89 percent) considered that it was a minor or reasonable rate relative to other sectors.
6. Perhaps the great weak point lies in the system of incentives, which more than half the individuals of the sample were not content with (about 53 percent). They considered that it was influenced by personal considerations, was not founded on a system of performance evaluation and was not connected to promotions in the organizations under study.

Third, as regards the dominant management philosophy in the organizations, the most important conclusions were:

1. About 60 percent of the individuals of the sample considered that the employees' participation in decision making was minor or absent, although they did not deny the presence of interest, however partial, in the development of the employees in the organization.

2. Management's lack of commitment to total objectivity in its treatment of employees' and workers' affairs was apparent; this led to many negative features arising from the dominance of personal considerations.

3. Management has not been seriously interested so far in knowing citizens' opinions regarding the goods and services it offers them.

4. It appeared from the study that administrative surveillance takes place by means which reflect a positive philosophy, although it is not lacking in certain negative aspects. There were 21.5 percent who considered that the surveillance method was very strict, and about a third of the individuals of the sample considered that accountability for mistakes and immediate punishment for them was small or very small in extent.

In the light of the conclusions of the study, the two researchers arrived at a group of recommendations which were aimed at supporting aspects of strength and remedying aspects of deficiency which the study showed. Examples of positive aspects in the management of the general organizations which had to be supported were the following:

The need to take exact areas of specialization, especially at higher administrative and educational levels. In addition, there are praiseworthy efforts to describe positions and define duties and responsibilities, alongside the presence of employment benefits and job insurance for the people working in these organizations. Let us not forget the presence of good relations between heads and subordinates and among colleagues. The two researchers observed that there was interest in the development of employees through diverse training, scholarships, conferences and other methods. All of these are positive aspects which the effort must be made to support as much as possible. Finally the positive aspects which must be supported include the moderate, positive system of surveillance which the organizations under study enjoy.

Concerning the aspects of deficiency to which the study recommends management attention, so that the effectiveness of the management of the general organizations in the kingdom may increase, the first was the need to increase the role of domestic executive management in helping set out organizational goals and the need to develop organizational goals in accordance with the developments and changes surrounding the organization. We can observe the importance of informing the people holding positions of their duties and responsibilities in order to make it possible to hold them to account on a sound basis and constantly review the system of

performance and job evaluation so that it will be in keeping with administrative and economic changes in the kingdom. Another important point which we should not fail to refer to is the importance of setting out administrative information systems guaranteeing the flow of information among the decisionmaking centers to carry out jobs in a streamlined manner. In another area, the study recommends the need to set out fair objective bases for the incentive system so that it will not be affected by personal considerations and will be connected to the other employee relations policies in the organization. It is also necessary that management be a model of commitment to objectivity and remoteness from influence by personal considerations or interests, so that it will be possible to demand that middle and executive levels model themselves after it and subordinates can feel fairness in treatment. In another area, it is necessary to support the spirit of cooperation and coordination among the various sections and departments to make it easy to obtain the necessary information in order rapidly to carry out jobs and increase the loyalty and satisfaction of the people working in them, as well as to assume the philosophy of participation by the executive levels in the adoption of decisions bearing on their work — in brief, the need for integrating various policies and practices bearing on employees' affairs so that it will be possible to develop and make good use of the human element, as the development plan in the kingdom has pointed out. Finally, the study directed attention to the importance of obtaining the cooperation of people dealing with the organization by creating channels to learn about their views regarding the goods and services offered them, carrying out their recommendations and acquainting them with the measures in effect in the organization so that the level of services offered by the general organizations will rise and they will indeed become able to perform their important mission in the process of economic and social development in the kingdom. 11887

Vocational Training, Employment Problems Reviewed

44040068a Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 1 Dec 87 p 7

[Article by Jabir al-Asmari: "Issue: Professionals in Areas of Specialization Which Are Not Theirs, in the Officials' View"]

[Text] Professionals in their areas of technical specialization are an important development issue and AL-RIYAD has been discussing it with a number of graduates who after graduation found themselves faced with a fact whose essence was, either work in employment areas totally removed from the actual conditions of their technical fields of specialization, or wait for a future opportunity.

Out of a desire to learn officials' views on this issue, we brought the young professional's hopes, dreams and questions, in order to set them forth most truthfully on the desks of Messrs Ahmad Hamad al-Yahya, the deputy

minister of labor and social affairs for labor affairs, Ahmad Ibrahim al-Hukmi, deputy minister of planning for sector planning, and Muhammad Sulayman al-Da-l'an, vice governor of the General Technical Education Organization.

The Labor Ministry's View

Our conversation at the beginning was with Mr Ahmad al-Yahya, through the following question:

"Professionals in areas of technical specialization which are not theirs are an issue which in the future might become an obstacle to comprehensive development. How can this problem be remedied? What causes have prompted these graduates to go to work in administrative jobs which are remote from the actual conditions of their academic areas of specialization?"

Mr al-Yahya said:

"Technically or vocationally qualified people constitute a reserve for the Saudi workforce. There is no doubt that the goal in qualifying them is aimed at their contributing, in accordance with their areas of specialization and job fields, to the comprehensive development of their nation in various areas and various sites. The job opportunities in our country now are many and with God's permission are able to absorb them, and the door to work for these people is open, through the General Civil Service Bureau or this ministry or by contact on their part with the general organizations and private sector installations. Therefore we stress that the scope is open for people looking for work in general, technicians, professionals and others, to obtain jobs by themselves directly. That is also open to employers, to get Saudis to enter into the job directly, without seeking recourse in the labor offices.

A Worker Instead of an Unemployed Person!

"In addition, not every person with a technical or vocational specialization is supposed to become a worker on a wage with an employer. Rather, some of them must engage in work for their own account and become employers themselves. The government has provided the necessary facilities in the form of loans and aid for people such as these, and here is where the role of the vocational or technical qualified persons in exploiting these opportunities lies. The situation calls for desire, sincere, unquestioned determination and patience and forbearance at the outset. Then it might be appropriate for one or more to take part in opening maintenance and repair shops in various areas of specialization. Therefore I believe that this orientation will guarantee that these young people are brought in and their employment dreams realized. However, there is a question whose gist is, 'What is the role of these young people as far as the desire goes and staying on the job in their areas, without leaving them and turning off to others?'"

No Need To Establish Such a Department!

AL-RIYAD: However, there are graduates who are asking that there be a specialized technical department which will be a connecting link in employment between these graduates and the public and private sectors, working to employ them in accordance with their technical specializations. As far as these young people are concerned this is a pressing demand.

Al-Yahya: I do not know what calls for the establishment of a specialized department for employing technicians, whether that is formed out of the Ministry of Planning, the Civil Service Bureau, the Ministry of Labor or the General Technical Education organization. The reasons and justifications for the demand of some graduates, as you have mentioned, for the establishment of this have not become apparent to me. If the goal was to employ them, this is done through the channels the government has set aside for this purpose, and I believe that a person who is serious about getting work will not be frustrated, especially since thousands of technical jobs are vacant in the private sector and it is also well known that the search for work requires the effort on the part of the person doing it to look for the right job. The means for finding a job are many and they include the labor offices.

Our Task Is To Oversee Employment and Saudization

It is well known that the Labor Ministry's role is represented by the labor offices that are spread about in the cities of the kingdom. It concentrate on supervising employment in private sector installations in accordance with the labor statute and the bills and decrees issued in regard to it. The labor offices have specialized departments and sections for employing citizens and people presenting themselves to the labor office, and the office will strive to exert its efforts to create the right job opportunities and get them to enter into them. We, in the labor offices and the competent entity in the ministry, are seeking to monitor the Saudization of jobs in private sector installations and the coordination that that requires with the competent government bodies, or to monitor the movement of the domestic workforce in the private installations or through surveillance of the study of requests to bring [labor] in from abroad, and perform employment in general.

The Ministry Is Concerned with Everyone

AL-RIYAD: There is an accusation which holds that a relationship is lacking between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in terms of job followup and the graduates of the technical institutes and the technical training center. Is this true, and why?

Al-Yahya: Although you have not stated by the question what the essence of this relationship is, and what it is desired that it be, what was meant was the ministry's care and attention to the graduates. These people, without a doubt, constitute one of the classes of Saudi

manpower in general, and although one must not discriminate between one group of Saudi job seekers and another, proceeding from concern for all, there is coordination between the labor offices and the vocational training centers which has been founded on coordination between this ministry and the General Technical Education and Vocational Training Organization, through our subsequent provision of data and forms from the vocational training centers. These are sent to the competent labor office and they include the names of graduates, their areas of specialization, the city in which the graduates want to work and some information on graduates. They are sent to the labor office 2 months before graduation in order to enable the labor offices to seek out the right job opportunity from the private sector installations. There also is coordination between the labor offices and the education units belonging to the organization on the creation of temporary job opportunities for students in institutes and technical schools of various specializations during the summer vacation for practical field training and the profitable use of free time during the academic holiday.

The Private Sector Is Concerned with Employing Domestic Labor

AL-RIYAD: Don't you think that it is necessary for the private sector to assume a more effective role in attracting young Saudis and employing them to take the place of the foreign labor?

Al-Yahya: There is no doubt that the private sector plays a great role in encouraging young Saudis and giving an opportunity to take part in building the edifices of development for our country through the job opportunities that are given to citizens in private sector installations. The employers themselves expressed this role through the recommendations of the third conference of Saudi businessmen held in the town of Abha on 15 April 1987, since it was stated in Paragraph One of the first recommendation regarding businessmen's assumption of their responsibilities vis-a-vis the domestic economy "The conference feels extreme anxiety vis-a-vis the mediocre employment of Saudi manpower as a result of intense competition among companies to employ manpower at a low wage. Therefore the conference recommends that means be sought which will guarantee that all Saudi and non-Saudi companies are compelled to employ the domestic manpower available, especially in government projects offered for competition. That will realize the government's goal of Saudization and will provide job opportunities for Saudi citizens on their own good soil." I wrote to the chairman of the council of Saudi chambers of commerce and industry, referring to the contents of the recommendations, including what was referred to above, and I wanted the council's contribution of its constructive efforts in this important area to assume a form which would lead to expansion in the employment of Saudis. I had hoped that I would receive

recommendations and means for guaranteeing the realization of what was cited in the abovementioned recommendation that they considered appropriate. We are still waiting for this. However, on the other hand, while employers are expressing this sincere desire, I hope that our young technical people who are seeking work in the private sector will respond to this approach and take this opportunity, and not only this, but that they will prove through their vocational abilities and capacities and their expertise that they are at a distinguished level and that they also prove their stability in jobs and the pursuit of work conduct and their abilities to raise the level of self-sacrifice and production in all areas. It is not shameful that this should be commercial, industrial or service activity. All these activities are considered the backbone of the economy in our country. Although I do not want to speak in the name of the private sector or employers, they make good contributions, whether they are the training courses that are held or matters related to the attraction and employment of Saudis. One significant item of evidence of the private sector's concern with the employment of Saudis could be what was cited in the recommendation above, in addition to coordination and cooperation to employ Saudis between this ministry and the labor offices and the council of chambers or chambers of commerce and industry spread about in the cities of the kingdom, or with the private sector installations, in accordance with specialization. The efforts exist and are ongoing. On this occasion, I encourage the employers to further cooperation, performance of duty and translation of this recommendation into a tangible, practical state of affairs.

The Ministry of Planning's View

The discussion brought us over to the assistant deputy minister of planning for sector planning, Mr Ahmad Ibrahim al-Hukmi. Our first question was on the possibility of dealing with this development issue and creating employment opportunities for those young people who are technically and vocationally qualified. He said,

"What there is no doubt about is that the strategy orientations of the fourth development plan at present require concentration on the provision of qualified domestic technical labor as an alternative to foreign technical labor, to which the development planning bodies are devoting full attention. The issue of directing technical institute and vocational center graduates in terms of jobs in their areas of technical specialization is something which is among the priorities of the officials' concerns in realizing comprehensive development goals and programs. However, the issue of directing technical and vocational institute graduates must take place and proceed from the actual state of the firm belief of all of us, in the government or private sector, in a fact whose gist is that we are living through a transitional period between the establishment of the industrial sector and the concentration of its productive capacities to meet existing needs. Through these intrinsic convictions, we will be able to find a place of employment in these two

sectors for domestic young people who are technically and vocationally qualified because of our total awareness that no industrial, construction, intellectual or other resurgence has taken or will take place except by the strength of the people of this nation who urge progress and advancement. Therefore, I pose this question to these young professionals: Don't you consider that the time has come for you to create industrial glory and a renaissance of civilization through your muscles and minds which will be added to the giant achievements that are being realized, and will in all areas constitute a reserve in the ledger of the history of peoples' development?

I am totally confident that my nation's technicians and professionals are able to set out a practical answer to this question and that they are able to trace the features of success and superiority. As to job opportunities, they exist, whether that is in the private sector or in the government one.

Coordination and a Halt to Bringing in Existing Areas of Specialization Are Necessary!

AL-RIYAD: Some graduates who have not found job opportunities request that there be an employment department possessing authority which is able to effect coordination between the government and private sector and the General Technical Education Organization as regards the creation of jobs for them, in accordance with their academic areas of specialization. What is your opinion regarding this? Al-Hukmi: In my own view, it is necessary to create effective coordination between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, through its offices, and also the General Technical and Vocational Education Organization, to provide the labor offices with lists of names of graduates and their technical and vocational specializations, and therefore expand the scope of this coordination to include the employment offices and departments in the government and private sectors, with the goal of listing the technical and vocational positions they have, whether they are held by foreign labor or vacant up to the present time, then direct the graduates to these sectors to occupy them as an alternative to foreign labor, and also appoint them to vacant technical and vocational positions, while asserting the need for them to engage in their technical specializations in their employment area, and not assign them to jobs outside the framework of their specializations, in view of the effect that has on their production and the development of their abilities and job performance — while failing to give visas to bring in foreign labor in vocational and technical areas of specialization in which large numbers had previously graduated who are scientifically and technically qualified members of the nation.

Professionals Are the Basis of Our Industrial Resurgence

AL-RIYAD: How in your view can the presence of professionals and technicians be realized in the development plan programs? What preparations have you made for that as a planning body?

Al-Hukmi: What cannot be doubted is that the contributions of young professionals and technicians in realizing the programs and goals of the comprehensive development plans are among the necessary features which have been founded on the firm beliefs that in order for productive factories to exist domestic manpower must exist before that which is capable of operating and administering these elements, and therefore the orientation of professionals to work in the private sector is a necessity with the goal of having a national industry arise on strong, firm ground and the economic and having the industrial revival of this important sector be realized. However, before both, we once again stress that the realization of this goal requires three important points of emphasis, which are awareness, desire and supply and demand.

Therefore, the development plans have provided many opportunities for professionals, by means of encouragement and incentives. We now have many academicians but we are in need of craftsmen and professionals as an operating force for these massive installations in the form of factories and the projects which have come into being and will come into being subsequently.

The View of the General Technical Education and Vocational Training Organization

The scope of the discussion expanded, in the desire to learn the views of many officials in charge of educating and qualifying professionals. We met with Mr Muhammad Sulayman al-Dal'an, the vice governor of the General Technical Education and Vocational Training Organization, who said:

"Professionals who are not in their areas of specialization in my view are a problem which has 'been annihilated' or is on the verge of ending. It is the problem of the years of the forward leap, since young professionals and technicians went to simple, comfortable jobs which did not require the exertion of physical or mental effort and for which they received attractive wages, such as 'comfortable' administrative jobs, because by the nature of the case of employment these are given only to people who deserve them, work and produce through them and have become specialized in order to obtain them.

"The problem in my view does not concern the people who go to jobs which are not in keeping with their academic specializations. Rather, the opposite, it is in the orientation toward educational areas which do not serve the existing need and future orientation of the nation, and this leads to the graduate's failure to obtain a job in his area of academic specialization. Here lies the problem, which needs a radical, rapid solution."

Prior Coordination Exists

AL-RIYAD: Some graduates complain that the right job is not available for them and ask of the organization that there be prior coordination between itself and the labor offices in order to provide the right job for them in accordance with their areas of specialization. What is your view on that?

Al-Dal'an: Coordination exists among the General Technical Education and Vocational Training Organization, the Ministry of Labor and the Civil Service Bureau. All graduates go to the labor offices to be employed and before graduation we send data to the nearest labor offices, stating the names, areas of specialization and desires of the people who are to graduate. The labor office takes charge in its turn of seeking work for them, and the graduates of the secondary, technical and technological institutes go to work through the Civil Service Bureau.

Phenomena Which Are in the Process of Disappearing!

The vice governor of the General Technical Education Organization added:

"What there is no doubt about is that there is a wrongful view of professionals on the part of some groups of the society, of technical and vocational (manual) work. However, this view has started to disappear. Its disappearance is connected to the spread of education and the development of awareness among the groups in the society. There is another aspect which is related to the economic factor. If technical and vocational jobs do not offer an excellent income which will improve the individual's situation economically and socially, the fate of this view will be to disappear, and it has actually started to end, since we have started to be aware of the large numbers of young people who have enrolled in and are enrolling in vocational and technical education in a collective form."

11887

SUDAN

Omdurman Cites Paper on Stable Security Situation

45000008b *Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic*
1400 GMT 7 Jan 88

[Excerpts] Brother comrades in arms and honorable listeners: AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH, published today, Thursday, 7 January 1988, carried the following headline, "The Commander in Chief: Our Forces Are in Full Control of the Situation in All Parts of the Country."

AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH reported the following: General Fawzi Ahmad al-Fadil, commander in chief of the People's Armed Forces, stressed that our forces are in full control of the situation in all parts of the country and that the security situation is completely stable, including in the two areas of Al-Kurmuk and Qaysan. His excellency stressed—in press statements the day before yesterday, while attending the festival of appreciation staged by Imam al-Mahdi Voluntary [word indistinct] Society—the complete and steadfast preparedness of our forces to safeguard the country's security and protect its soil and honor.

To a question put by AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH to Retired Major General Fadlallah Burmah Nasir, minister of state in the Ministry of Defense, on the effect on the peace operation of the military skirmishes with Ethiopian forces since the liberation of Qaysan, his excellency said: Our borders are stable on all fronts and we are striving for a just peace without surrender. We shall continue to support and train our armed forces, in peace or war, until they become a strike force to protect our long borders. His excellency stressed that a large sum had been allocated for rehabilitating the armed forces which was equal to the funds allocated over the last 3 years.

On the meeting of the joint Sudanese-Ethiopian Committee, his excellency said: We hope that the committee will discuss all issues very frankly and clearly so that relations between the two countries can be brought back to normal, something which the government has stressed at more than one meeting.

Al-Tawm Muhammad al-Tawm, minister of information said: On the agenda of the meeting will be discussion of Ethiopia's involvement and interference in the occupation of al-Kurmuk and the Ethiopian violations of Sudanese territory, as the confessions of prisoners (proved) that the rebels equipment and maneuvers emanated from Ethiopian territory.

The Sudanese side will be represented by, in addition to the minister of foreign affairs, Retired Major General Fadlallah Burmah, minister of state in the Ministry of Defense; a representative from the Ministry of the Interior, and a representative from military intelligence.

His Excellency the foreign minister expressed the hope that the meeting would come up with satisfactory results to restrict and stop the Ethiopian acts of aggressions against Sudanese territory.

In a report from the area of operations, AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH said that, following the increase in the outlaws activities and their attempt to besiege Kapoeta, our forces rushed convoys which clashed with the outlaws and forced them to flee. They also shelled with mortars the outlaws camp in (Karenga) area, killing six outlaws and injuring a large number of them.

/9738

Al-Mahdi on Domestic Issues, Foreign Policy

45000008a *Khartoum SUNA in Arabic*
1043 GMT 4 Jan 88

[Text] Khartoum, 4 Jan (SUNA)—Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, prime minister and defense minister, made a statement to the newspapers AL-SIYASAH published today. The statement deals with hot domestic issues and foreign policy. His excellency assessed the progress of matters on the domestic and regional levels.

Talking to journalists on the fifth column and press agency, al-Mahdi said there are various legal instruments that will be used against the fifth column and agents in order to safeguard the homeland without encroaching on justice. He explained that there is a draft law for registering parties in order to safeguard democratic practices from acts aimed against the country's unity and sound democracy.

On the government's approach toward taking peace steps after the Liberation of Kurmuk, the prime minister explained that the peace steps have never been completely ceased at any stage. He said the liberation of the border areas, including Qaysan, will help give greater attention to the peace steps linked to the issue of Sudanese-Ethiopian relations.

On world reaction to the Kurmuk events, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi indicated that the United States adopted a position alongside Sudan's sovereignty. The same position was adopted by many European and Arab states to various degrees. As for the African position, it is usually lost in such cases in order to be able to mediate if the need arises.

On foreign policy, his excellency affirmed that his government's policy is based on nonalignment, good neighborliness, neutrality, and playing a positive role to contain Arab, African, and Islamic disputes.

Answering a question by AL-SIYASAH on the government's efforts to halt the war between Iraq and Iran, his excellency affirmed that Sudan does not currently have an initiative in this regard.

On the September Laws, the prime minister explained that the cancellation program will continue and will be fully completed within 2 months at most. He affirmed the activity of the [words indistinct] working to abrogate the September Laws.

Answering another question on the Sudanese charter, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi explained that the charter revolves around points [passage indistinct].

/9738

Economic Projects, Problems Reviewed
45040021 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic
14, 21 Nov 87

[Article by Rami Nabil Khuri: "Economics of the Sudan, Part 1]

[14 Nov 87 p 27]

[Text] Sudan's economy has been heavily impacted by government investment activity since the Sudan and Ethiopia signed the Addis Ababa agreement which put an end to the civil war in the South. Although such activity improved the balance sheet of the public sector,

it imposed on the economy high standards of capital and semi-manufactured imports at the same time that exports declined because the authorities neglected the traditional export-oriented sectors. A faulty investment program fell short of its goals. Escalating imports/exports led to an increase in foreign borrowing from \$100 million in 1972 to more than \$500 million in 1974. Sudanese foreign debts remained close to \$600 million until 1978, when they began climbing again.

Sudanese authorities recognized the gravity of the situation only in 1977-78, when a program was instituted to revamp the economy as a whole in cooperation with the IMF. In addition to a 3-year monetary facility, the Fund suggested the devaluation of the Sudanese pound from \$25 to \$2 for government transactions, basic imports, and most exports, and the introduction of a parallel exchange rate of \$1.25 per Sudanese pound for non-essential imports, private transactions, etc. The Fund also proposed abolition of the tax disbursement system and subsidies to commodities; granting a preferential exchange rate to Sudanese expatriates; and abolition of the development tax on exports. Since then, the Sudanese government has also changed its economic policy in such fundamental aspects as a more realistic exchange rate, tax reform, reduced state subsidies to consumer goods, increased incentives for export-oriented agricultural activities, remapping of the industrial sector (especially public corporations), prioritizing domestic petrochemical production, new investment laws with incentives for the private sector, and the rescheduling of foreign debts as a follow-up to the Paris meeting of 1979.

The Sudanese government also postponed the 1977-78/1982-83 six-year development plan which called for several ambitious projects, and opted instead for a three-year general investment plan that emphasizes the completion of projects underway and the reevaluation of old projects every three years. The plan's basic objectives were to bolster and develop infrastructure, especially for such sectors as transportation, energy, storage, and water resources; rationalize cost vis-a-vis price and remove impediments to production; increase the return on Sudan's cotton exports, which are the major source of foreign exchange; the institution of fiscal and monetary policies to promote exports and improve the balance of payments; and developing the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] at an annual average of 6.5 percent.

The Sudanese economy is based on agriculture, which accounts for 35 to 40 percent of the GDP and more than 90 percent of exports. Agriculture supplies most of the raw materials for basic industries and employs more than 80 percent of the workforce. Sudan's major cash crop is cotton, but it also exports peanuts, gum arabic, sesame seeds, and corn. Sudan's agricultural sectors fall into four major divisions: modern irrigated fields, crops supported by rainwater and modern machinery (these two sectors account for more than 65 percent of total production), traditional rain-supported agriculture, and animal husbandry. The 1970's witnessed an increase in

rain-supported fields and a corresponding decrease in irrigated acreage. The 1970's also witnessed a decline in the production of all major crops, especially cotton which is planted in irrigated fields. Cotton production fell 1.157 million bales in 1975 to 609,000 bales in 1980. The main reasons for the decline were the lack of foreign exchange to buy chemicals and machinery, weak marketing, and pricing policies that encouraged the production of goods with less export appeal. The decrease in cotton production corresponded with an increase in the planting and production of such rain-supported produce as peanuts, corn, and tobacco.

[21 Nov 87 p 27]

[Text] The Sudanese government attempted during the first half of the past decade to increase the irrigated area, support the development of mechanized agriculture, and encourage dense utilization of the Al-Jazirah project by emphasizing the planting of peanuts and wheat instead of cotton. Added value in the irrigated sector rose at an annual rate of 45 percent. The first adjustment of oil prices brought the Sudan to the attention of the Arab oil producers as the future breadbasket of the Arab world because of its immense agricultural capability. Work began on several large-scale public projects such as Al-Rahad irrigation project, the Al-Kinana sugar project, and the Jonglei Canal project. But the Sudanese government reverted to emphasizing the development of cotton production at the expense of wheat, and giving more attention to exchange investments after a long period of neglect as it failed to increase food production, and as the volume and value of exports shrank. The Arab states' dream of turning Sudan into a breadbasket of the future failed to materialize because of infrastructure problems and economic difficulties in the Sudan. Yet this failure did not prevent the implementation of a number of small food-related projects funded by Arab capital. Large projects, such as those by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and the World Bank plan to invest 350 million dinars over 10 years, are oriented towards reorganizing and reclaiming cotton acreage.

The industrial sector contributes only 6 to 7 percent of the GDP and about 4 percent of the labor force. The domestic market consumes most industrial output with exports accounting for the remainder, including petroleum derivatives and cottonseed oil. Industries in the Sudan depend on agriculture for raw material. Major existing industries include cotton ginning, flour mills, sugar refineries, soft drinks, clothes and textiles, shoes, cigarettes, and soap. There are also other important

petroleum, plastics, and chemical industries which import their raw materials. A major objective of the Sudan is to export sugar produced by the Al-Kinana project (which is still operating well below its potential annual capacity of 330,000 tons) and by four other refining plants. Sudan is also making plans for several cement facilities to bolster current production and attain self-sufficiency at a time when cement imports declined after they finished building a new facility to produce it locally. One can say that the Sudan did not attain significant growth during the past decade. Despite a lot of government support, the annual growth rate could not pass the one percent mark because of raw material shortages, economic crises, and technical difficulties. The most significant problem facing the modern sector is heavy dependence on imported oil, whose cost has recently risen to as much as \$500 million, which is fully one-fourth of total imports and consumes a goodly portion of the reserves. The industrial sector will be forced to remain dependent on imported oil products even after the Sudan begins crude oil exports in 1986 [as published] unless the current refining capacity is expanded.

The GDP in the period 1970-71/1972-73 fell at an annual rate of 5 percent as a result of internal strife and the nationalization of most industrial institutions. It climbed to 8 percent in the period 1972-73/1977-78 after the state began implementing a wide-scale investment program to develop the domestic economy. After that fast climb, the Sudanese economy suffered a remission in 1987 when the government strategy proved unproductive, despite high costs, because the government gave priority to industrial plans rather than agriculture and basic infrastructure. Rapid expansion of domestic insurance, thanks to borrowing by the public sector, especially from foreign sources as well as the central bank, led to sharp escalations in inflation rates. There has been some recent improvement in the deficit as a percentage of GDP because the state tightened up on spending, especially for development. However, restrictions on supply, continued to push consumer indices to higher levels. The structure of current expenses tends in a special way to serve debts and to cover the expenses of subsidies of some commodities which the government found difficult to expose to free market forces. As for revenues, taxes have been increased to the limit and can produce no more income because of the recession. Therefore, the government is currently concentrating efforts to improve tax collection. The Sudan is additionally hurt by a reduction in the volume of imports, since customs duties are a major type of income for the state.

12459

INDIA

Fernandes Claims Decentralization Needed

46000046 Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English
13 Dec 87 pp 6-7

[Text] Forty years on with all its so-called socialist, humanist and Gandhian pretensions thrown to the winds, India seems to be sliding in the direction of forms of fascism worse than Fascism itself. But the great fighter and labour leader George Fernandes is carrying on the fight with courage and optimism. It may get worse, but it will become better.

Mr. Fernandes spoke to Impact. Excerpts:

Question: India had started its journey into independence with socialistic ideas, but 40 years on it looks that the country is sliding fast towards an extremist, or one should say, a fascist form of political order. How do you look at this situation?

George Fernandes: The socialist ideas you refer to were socialist only in name. Nehru talked about socialism but he was no socialist. I do not think that we ever seriously tried to take a socialist path. The policies followed by Nehru and his successors have on the other hand helped to bolster exploitative capitalism to create an urban nu rich at the cost of the peasant and village.

Question: But the Janata Party ruled the country for two years and it included a socialist like yourself?

Janata was not a socialist party. I then used to say that 'I am a socialist, but the government I am a member of is not socialist.' The Janata were the same people—Morarji Desai, Charan Singh—who had spent a major part of their political career in the Congress party—and they could not give any new political direction.

Yes, I am afraid, we are moving in the fascist direction. However, India has already experienced institutionalised fascism during Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Emergency rule in 1975-77. It was a naked dictatorship, but the important thing is that eventually the people rejected it. Mrs Gandhi had to go to the polls and she lost them. I, therefore, believe that any lurch towards fascism now would only be transitory.

The extremists cannot last long, but the problem is that the Opposition is as much part of the system as the Establishment and nothing is being done to carve out a new path. Take the case of Mr. V.P. Singh. All these years he had been in the ruling party and in the government. He is kicked out and all of a sudden he realises that the political order was thoroughly corrupt and rotten. Many people are beginning to gather around him, but little is being done to give new and alternative politics. My worry is about the Opposition, not the ruling party. The Opposition is important.

Question: So what's the choice between Rajiv Gandhi and V.P. Singh or Opposition, ineffectual as it is?

George Fernandes: Not much really, but a pattern is emerging.

In the state of West Bengal you have a radical left government and Jyoti Basu has commenced his sixth year as Chief Minister. We may disagree with a lot of things, the Marxists do, but they are well entrenched in West Bengal.

Tripura, a small state of a million plus people, is ruled by the Communist Party of India (Marxists).

In Assam you have these young kids who ten years ago were agitating about the electoral register. Today they are running the state and no one is going to remove them easily. The Congress(I) party there is decimated. The Janata lost deposits in all the constituencies it had contested in the last elections to the state assembly.

Mizoram and Meghalaya have non-Congress governments.

You do not have the Congress(I) ruling in the north-east, nor do you have any other party which has national pretensions operating in that part of the country.

In the north-east, Mr. Gandhi had to hang on to the coat-tails of Faruq Abdullah, whom he had earlier branded as a traitor, criminal and anti-national Faruq has given the Congress(I) a couple of junior ministerial offices, but he can kick out Gandhi's men and rule on his own. Then you have Punjab with an Akali majority though presently under President's rule. And now Haryana has been taken over by the Lok Dal. In the South we already had non-Congress(I) governments in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

So we have today a political geography in which almost half of India is ruled by non-Congress(I) parties. Some are regional and some have national pretensions. And therefore, I feel that we are not going to have in a hurry a national party in the Hindi-speaking belt which is going to emerge and announce that we are now the national alternative to the Congress(I).

Whether we like it or not, we have to go for a coalition phase.

Question: Don't you think that this regionalisation of power and disintegration of the Congress(I) might lead to destabilisation of the country itself? Mr. Gandhi has been talking about the threat of destabilisation.

George Fernandes: On the contrary the problem is too much centralisation and India needs to be decentralised. The talk of destabilisation is an old hat and we have been hearing it since the last 30 years. When things go wrong or get out of control, the Congress(I) begins to see an external hand.

Question: It may be a bogey, but people do take it seriously.

George Fernandes: I think people now generally feel that the biggest destabilising factor is Mr. Gandhi himself. I do not think that these bogey talks carry much conviction with people.

Question: What is the situation in Punjab? Is it not a serious problem?

George Fernandes: It is a serious problem indeed. However, for all the exercises of Mr. Gandhi to make it look as a problem that is being created by people from outside Punjab, there is now a greater awareness that it is a problem that had been created by Mrs. Gandhi.

The Punjab situation is one in which the Sikh psyche has been gravely hurt and one needs to make amends for that. Sikhs feel that they are aliens in their own country, that their religion was under attack and that the attack by the army on the Golden Temple was an attack on their very existence. One has to convince them that what happened was a mistake. That chapter should be closed at that point and the Sikh youth convinced that the future of everyone lies in living together and not in going the way some of them believe they need to go. However, as long as the Congress(I) is in power, it won't be possible to resolve the problem in Punjab because the problem was linked with the proprietorial concern of Mrs. Gandhi and now her son, Rajiv Gandhi. This whole pro-prietorial politics has to be rejected and then alone it would be possible to find a solution to the problem of Sikh alienation.

Question: Why did you say that Mr Rajiv Gandhi is the greatest destabiliser?

George Fernandes: When I say he is the greatest destabiliser, I mean he is following the same divisive policies which were introduced by his mother, the policy of dividing people, creating animosities among them and manipulating the conflict to keep herself in power.

Question: How seriously do you take the allegations of corruption against Mr. Gandhi, 'Mr. Clean' of the early days?

George Fernandes: It's the media which had projected him as 'Mr. Clean.' I do not know when he was washed white, when he was dry-cleaned. In the first place Mr. Gandhi was an airline pilot. He never knew much about politics, but his wife (Sonia) without being an Indian citizen was managing director of one of the Maruti (car)

companies. This was in violation of the foreign exchange rules, of the company act and all the regulations of the Reserve Bank of India. Sitting in the Prime Minister's House, she was siphoning money from Maruti. Maruti was a racket of Mr Gandhi's younger brother (Sanjay Gandhi) who is now dead. And Mrs. Rajiv Gandhi could not have been a part of this, without her husband being aware of it. Therefore, Mr. Gandhi's cleanliness is not historically true.

Now Mr. Gandhi is talking about the corporate sector being dirty, but his own election and party politics are costing millions literally every year. Where does this money come from? There is no party membership. No membership fees are being collected. No money is coming from the corporate sector, because the company law prohibited donations to political parties. So where does the money come from to run the party machine, to fight the election?

The money comes from foreign deals, from defence purchases. Mr. Gandhi is his own Defence Minister. He made the deals. For once in his life he spoke the truth when he claimed that he said there should be no middle men.

Question: So far these are just allegations which get thrown over anyone in power.

George Fernandes: There is enough material for a prima facie case against Mr. Gandhi. I reported these in great detail to the (then) President of India, Giani Zail (who has since finished his term on 24 July. I had asked the president either to obtain the resignation of the Prime Minister or give permission for his prosecution on charges of corruption and/or abetment in acts of corruption. (Mr. Zail Singh explained his decision in an interview with Mr. Kuldeep Nayar published in 'Sunday' of Calcutta, 19-25 July 1987. He said: 'I came to the conclusion that to give permission for prosecution of the Prime Minister was not a small thing even if his reputation may be in mud. I am retiring in a few days. If I had done it, it would not have looked good. That is the reason I did not apply my mind fully).'

Question: It is argued that the Gandhis were probably always corrupt, but why now? Could there be a CIA connection behind all this fuss, behind the resignation of V.P. Singh? Are the Americans happy with Mr Gandhi?

George Fernandes: I presume the CIA, KGB and other foreign intelligence agencies must be active in India, but I think it would be unfair to link V.P. Singh's resignation with whatever the CIA may be doing in India. However there is only one recorded evidence of the CIA's involvement in Indian politics and that is when the agency financed Mrs. Gandhi to fight elections first in Kerala and then in West Bengal, both states being under communist rule. Mrs. Gandhi was then President of Congress(I). I believe the Americans are quite happy with Mr. Gandhi.

Question: How do you see India's political geography in the next ten years?

George Fernandes: Ten years is a long time. I can not visualise India with the present Establishment continuing for more than a couple of years. The Congress(I) has

to be ousted and a decentralised policy introduced in India. Except for defence, finance, external affairs and communications, we should give the states all the rest of the powers.

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